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Indian Society

B. S. JAIN

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PREFACE

Indian Society is a panorama, to a large extent a unique one which absorbed a number of diversities in various fields i e language, culture, religious etc But a grand synthesis of cultures, religions and languages of the people belongin · to different Castes and Communities has upheld its unity The study of Indian Social Institutions is a necessary prelude to understand Indian Society

Ancient Indian Social thought to whom most of our Institutions are based, has been significantly represented by the Vedas, the upanishad's, and the Bhagwad Gita The Social thought found in the great Epics, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana, is a more Complex and Comprehensive The Manu Smritis, alongwith other Smritis, dealt with every social institutions and the entire panorama of human life vertically and horizontally The vertical perspective led to the concept of the Ashram System and the horizontal led to the concept of varna vyavistha

In the present work most of the illustrations and the content are given from these classic works In this book we have analysed the Classical-philosophical and contemporary indian social institutions

This book has been aimed to serve as an authentic text book for the College and University Students of Indian Society and Indian Social Institutions

The author have drawn mainly upon the original works & prestigious text books available in english It is difficult to thank each of them individually, but we have listed them in bibliography

Author is responsible for any mistakes in this book and if there is anything Useful, the Credit goes fully to the works, We elabordly used in this work Creative Suggestions for the improvement would be most welcome

B. S. JAIN

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1

INDIAN CULTURE

MAJOR CHARACTERISTICS, CULTURAL PLURALISM & UNITY AND DIVERSITY

India is a plural society both in letter and spirit It is rightly characterized by its unity and diversity A grand synthesis of cultures, religions, languages of the people belonging to different castes and communities has upheld its unity and cohesiveness despite foreign invasions, and the Mughal and the British rule National unity and integrity have been maintained even though sharp economic and social inequalities have obstructed the emergence of egalitarian social relations It is this synthesis which has made India a unique mosaic of cultures India fought against the British Raj as one unified entity India is, in fact a panorama of its own type, without a parallel in other continents, Foreign invasions, immigration from other parts of the world, and the existence of diverse languagesm cultures and religions have made India's culture tolerant, on the one hand, and a unique continuing and living culture, with its specificity and historicity, on the other

Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Islam, Sikhism and Christianity are the major religions There fifteen national languages, besides several hundred dialects There is diversity not only in regard to racial compositions, religious and linguistic distinctions but also in patterns of living, life styles, land tenure systems, occupational pursuits, inheritance and and succession law, and practices and rites related to birth, marriage, death, etc

Post-Independence India is a nation united against several odds and obstacles The idea of unity of India is inherent in all its historical and socio cultural facts as well as in its cultural heritage India is a secular state It has one constitution proving gurantees for people belonging to diverse regions, religions, cultures and languages It covers people belonging to all socio-economic strata

Indian Society

Before we discuss the unity and diversity of Indian society, it would be better to understand the main charactristics of Indian Society and Culture

The following are the main elements of indian society

1. GEOGRAPHICAL

The name "India" is derived from **"Sindhu"** (Indus), the great river in the North-West In traditional and legendary Hindu literature, India is called Bharatakhanda, and sometimes, it is called Jambudvipa, one of the seven concentric legendary islands comprising the earth India is a vast sub-continent which extends for 3 200 km from south to north and 3,000 km from east to west

The entire area covers 32,80483 sq km Inspite of its diverse geographical features India looks like a single natural geographical entity Geographical unity of India is reinforced by religious centres spread all over the sub-continent. The Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians and people of other faiths with their respective places of worship are spread all over the country and they live together and greet each other on each other's festival They participate together in political activities The participate together in political activities The political unity of India has been maintained by a uniform administrative set up and law of the land.

N K. Bose, a renowned social-anthropologist, listed the following geographical features which have had a direct or indirect bearing upon the history and civilization of India. These are (1) the comparative isolationor protection afford by the northern mountain ranges, (2) the character of the two coasts of the peninsula, (3) the tropical heat and rainfall, (4) the character of the soil, and (5) the presence of extensive alluvial plains in the north, and of a plateau in the south

2. HISTORICAL STRUCTURE

Several thousand years before the birth of Christ when the Aryans entered and began to expand in India from the North-Wes' Punjab, there already existed in Sindh, the Panjab; parts of Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh a highly developed civilization which is generally called the civilization of the Sindh Valley, though it was not confined to Sindh It extended to the regions of the upper Punjab, Gangetic Valley, Bikner and Udaipur and probably to more distant parts of India. The people who built this civilization worshipped gods and goddesses, tress and animals, birds and beasts, and offered sacrifices, employed trees and animals, birds and beasts, and offered sacrifices, employed magical spells and wore amulets The aryans subdued them but the vanquished had their had their revenge The conquered people thrust into the religion of the Rig Veda their own gods and goddesses and magical beliefs and superstitions The eccretions were throughly assimilated, and presented in refined language, but they do from a part of the Rig Vedic religion and easily betray their non-Vedic origin

As early as the 7th century B C. India had trade relations with Western Asia, and through it with Rome, from where flowed into India gold coins which our ancestors adopted In the 4th century B C the Greeks, led by Alexander the Great, invaded India His authority was short lived, but the Greeks, as princelings,

continued to rule petty principalities in the North West frontiers for about three centuries This long contact might have influenced the Indian culture but we have no definite evidence of any substantial impact except that Indian astronomy bears marks of the influence of Greek astronomy Some Greek astronomers were held in great respect and their works were highly esteemed in India

The Greeks were followed by invaders of other races—Sakas and Pahalavas in the second century B C, Scythians in the first century B C, Kushanas in the 1st century A D. and the Hunas in the 6th century A D All these invaders carved out large or small kingdom for themselves The Hunas founded an empire, but it was only ephemeral All the foreigners who poured into India from the 4th century B C to the 6th century A D mostly settled in India and became completely Hinduised So throughly were they assimilated that no definite foreign element, ethnic, linguistic or cultural, is now easily traceable But we cannot reasonably assert that the Aryan culture remained quite unaffected by their impact Their religious beliefs and superstitions, and their social habits *and customs must have imperceptibly penetrated the cultural citadel of the arrogant Aryans* Thus the cultural mixture became more and more saturated

3. SOCIAL ORGANISATION

For a proper understanding of the Indian Society it is necessary to analysis the main characteristics of its social organisation The social organisation revolve round the following institutions

    (1) Ashrama Vyavastha,

    (2) Varna-Vyavastha,

    (3) Caste, and

    (4) Joint Family

(1) Ashrama-Vyavastha—The basis of Hindu Social Organisation is Ashrama- Vyavastha and Verna-Vyavastha In Ashrama-Vyavastha, human life has been devided into different tages These stages are kind of schooling and discipline During the course of schooling the individual has to pass through four stages of training These stages are called Ashramas which are four in number of training These stages are called Ashramas which are four in number viz, the Brahmacharyashrama, Grihasthashrama, Vanprasthashrama and Sannyasa In the Brahmacharyashrama, the individual is enabled to realize the

ultimate reality. In the Grihasthashrama, the plastic youth of an individual is diverted towards a life of duty Hence the individual cultivates 'dharma', 'artha' and 'Kama' In Vanprasthashrama the individual ignores his worldly attachment He gives up his fields of Artha and Kama Therefore, dharma and moksha becomes his main concern In Samnyasa, moksha occupies the supreme place In other words, the dharma which an individual cultivates in former ashramas becomes indentified with moksha

(2) Varna Vyavashtha—In Ashrama-Vyavastha there is a division of human life. But in Varna-Vyavastha there is a division of society into four stratas namely Brahman, Kashatriya, Vaishya and Shudra Various duties and oblibations have been assigned to these varnas The Varna-Vyavastha is the main basis of social stratification

Since the Rigvedic age the Hindu society has been divided into four main divisions—(1) teachers and scholars (Brahmans), (2) rulers and fighters (Kshatriyas), (6) businessmen and agriculturists (Vaishas) and (1) workers and artisans (Shudras). Such divisions were there in all ancient and medieval societies, and had grown and developed out of the economic necessities of the age, and roughly speaking they exist in all countries even in the present times But comparatively they are more rigid in India than in other places, and have fruther ramified and resulted into countless subdivisions known as castes, the members of which do not interdine or intermarry. The caste system with its endogamy and exogamy is an important feature of the Indian Society.

(3) Caste—The institutions of Caste has been in existence from indefinite past Its influence on the development of Indian thought and society has been abiding and penetrating nature. Races which came to India in different ages gradually merged in its vicious influence No Indian, irrespective, of his colour and creed has been able to escape from its clutches Its laws have been obeyed by all without any hesitation Although, in all ages anticaste movements were launched, even then it is as firm as ever

(4) Joint Family—Joint family is the fourth pillar of Indian society. The widest expression of joint family is sub-caste. According to K.M Pannikar, "This is the widest social group that the Hindus evolved and is therefore the limit of his allegiance of his social relations. It is the bed rock on which the Hindu Social Organisation is built."

It has come down from the age of the Rig Veda. Some changes have taken place since the advent of the British rule which

introduced a uniform pattern of education, quick means of transport, opportunities of services and business in different parts of the country, but joint family system is the general feature of Indian society even at present, and determines the nature of relationship existing between the members of a family, their duties and obligations and also their rights. Respect for parents, support of widows daughters and sisters and the maintenance of infant relatives are the noble features of Indian culture. The senior and earning member of a family takes upon himself the duty which in European countries is considered that of the government now-a-days. Members of a family, though separated by distance and time, because of occupational compulsions, feel united by a traditional and sentimental common tie which is not so much noticeable in other countries.

4. CULTURAL STRUCTURE

Culture is neither eastern nor western, it is human and fundamentally the same everywhere in the whole world, but climatic, racial and religious factors lend certain features to the culture of every country, and distinguish one culture from the other, and when a reference is made to the culture of a country, it is distinctive features that are generally prominent in our mind, and which help us in correctly understanding the country and appreciating its thoughts and traditions.

Like all other cultures, Indian culture also has some special features. It is predominantly Aryan or Vedic, but it bears the impress of several other features, ancient and modern, and can, therefore, be called a mixed culture, though it maintains, to a large extent, its old and original character, and continues to be mainly the Vedic culture. However, contributions to or assimilations by it of extraneous elements, constitute main special features.

Till about half a century ago, the headgear and the style of dhotis of man, and the size and style of sarees of women differed from province to province. There are differences of food and ways of eating. Marital ceremonies are also not quite uniform. Some festivals which are very important and popular and celebrated with great enthusiasm in northern India have no significance at all in the south. In northern India also there are local festivals in every state—Puja in Bengal, Lodhi in the Punjab and Gangore in Rajasthan. Besides, there are certain social mannaers, customs and traditions which are local and not easily intelligible to the people of other states. Popular beliefs and superstitions which do not form

part of any religion, are also different in different places, but the difference is only of form, basically they are common all over.

Thus Indian culture is full of diversities which make it a very interesting study. The distinctions are there but they are not deep and do not militate against the unity of our culture.

5. RELIGIOUS STRUCTURE

The uniqueness of the Indian Society is religious too According to the 1931 census there were ten religious groups in India These were Hindus, Jains, Buddhists, Muslims, Sikhs, Zoroastrians, Christians, Jews and other tribal and non-tribal religious groups Although the various religious groups in India present elements of external differences, but it never become a source of conflict and violence Today followers of all religions participate together in the common life, commerce, government, industry and other sectors of public life.

6. LINGUISTIC STRUCTURE

According to Grierson, India has 179 languages and 44 dialects However, this estimate cannot be authentically accepted as authentic, since dialects were counted under the head of 'languages' The constitution of India, in its Eighth Schedule, recognises 15 languages These are Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu Hindi has been given the status of India's *official language*, along with English The people speaking Rajasthani, Maithili, Maimpuri and Nepali want their language to be incorporated in the Eighth Schedule Santhali, Mundari and Ho are also spoken by a large number of people. In undivided India, over 73 per cent of the people spoke the Indo-Aryan languages, 1 3 per cent the Austric languages and only 0 85 per cent spoke the Sino Tibetan languages There has been interaction between the three main families of languages

Indian Culture

The Hindu people have had an organised social system for more than 3,000 years The vedas, the *Upanishads, the Dharamshastras, the Griha Sutra* have knit the people of India from the Himalayas to cape camorin, As *pannikar* writes the *Dharamshastras* and *Griha Sutras* which embody these principles, however, applied only to certain dominant classes But the large masses in the country followed the authority of custom and practice Thus 'it is one of the miracles of history" that such a loosely knit

society has survived over two millennia and a half and is today "an active and vigorous society" ready to take its place in the world

Following are the central feature or characteristics of Indian Culture

1. Religion-oriented

Indian Culture finds its foundation in religion i e *Dharma* Indian concept of religion is different from the essence of western approach of religion which something external and merely an embodiment of rituals *Dharma* is the most important and influential concept in Indian Culture and Society Literally, the word 'dharma' means "what holds together" "what sustains" Thus *Dharma* is considered to be at the basis of all social and moral order It is a comprehensive doctrine of the duties and rights of an individual in an ideal society There is dharma for each group namely, Varna dharma, *Jati dharma Kula dharma* etc There is also the concept of *Sadharna dharma* i e dharma which is common to all individuals, belonging to the various groups Each authority gives its own list of the *sadharana dharama* but the ideals, common to all these listsare virtues like truth, non-violence, self-control and compassion" *Dharma* is something above one's aim in life having its roots deeply involved in the arena of spirituality Dharma binds the Indian way of life it differentiates a man from beast

The conception of the people about Indian version of dharma that it does not relate to the people living in the world and hence it is escapist in approach   is false and devoid of the understanding that the material aspect and the spiritual aspect are absolutely blended and this transcends the cultural life of Indian people

2. Spiritualism

'Know thyself' is the fundamental objective of Indian culture Indian saints, philosophers, and seers all have maintained that in order to acquire complete knowledge a man, first of all, should know himself This is the reason of Indian religion being *intraverted* instead of being *extraverte* and its inclination towards spiritualism than towards materialism claims of wealth and pleasures are subordinate to *dharama* or *virture* Thus Indian culture emphasizes birtue rather than the pursuit of wealth, and pleasure' Thus, "Indian culture is not other worldly" or world denying The correct interpretation is that an individual should pursue wealth and pleasure within the limitations of virtue, till he reaches the last stage of the development of his personality when he renources wealth as pleasure in order to attain liberation *(mokhsa)*

Indian thinker like Sri Aurbindo have said that spirituality is *the key to the mind of Indians* One's deeds are to adjudged in parlance of spirituality Indian culture is the leader of the world the sphere of spirituality Spirituality implies sanctity of thought, deed, expression, attitude and behaviours Spirituality leads to perfection and well being of all The idea of spirituality lies in the core of all the *theistic* and *atheistic* philosophies of Indian religion. Indian Culture and Civilization has been influenced by the idea of spirituality to a tremendous exten, and no thought can escape the mention of religion and spirituality in our country

3. Religious tolerance

Secularism is a modern concept to designate the accient concept of religious tolerance in our country. Though different religious have been preached, propogated, but religion has never been an issue of conflict among the people belonging to different religious communities Religions have taught people to suppress violence instead of being a cause of it About the charactristics of tolerance it is commented that, "It (tolerance) is a fundamental postulate of Indian thought that every kind of life has its own contribution to make to human welfare From the earliest times the analogy of the rivers flowing into the sea has had profoumd influence on Indian society So there is no attempt to make other persons to conform to one's own ways of thinking and ways of living This is one of the reasons why different relifious groups have had full freedom to practise their creeds. We have in India, Christian churaches, Jewish synagogues, Parsi temples and Muslim mosquess since a thousand years and more "

Another feature is rise of several protestant groups within Hinduism, right from the time of Buddha and Mahavira

'It is very difficult to tell whether this tolerant outlook is a strength or weakness of the culture But there is no doubt that because of the tolerant outlook there has always been an effort at synthesis and the attempt to develop a spirit of univeral outlook I

4. Assimilating Capacity

Indian culture has the capacity to assimilate all the protesting webs in itself and it has been happening since the time when the very first seed of Indian cultre was sown. The credit of giving this capacity goes to the founding pillers of Indian culture—the Aryans and since then all the revolting religious attitude and views have merged with it to form the composite culture of India Hinduism has accepted all the religions under its

umbrella and this has enhanced its capacity and adaptability and even the Muslims have not been exceptions to it

5. Adaptability

Indian culture remained unaffected by the invading cultures from the alien lands and till today it is intact The cause of this amazing continuity of Indian culture is its quality to accommodate the changes from time to time Adaptability to the changes of time is a unique feature of Indian culture It- glorious survival preserves that it is more powerful than other cultures Foreigners came and went, political structure changed and many upheavals were experienced but Indian culture never lost the ground and it has managed, quite successfully, to adopt changing circumstances to its own necessity

6. Versatile View Point

Indian culture is neither one sided nor lopsided but versatile, and integral in its approach to life Along with encompassing spiritual and material aspects of life it stresses the need for progress and developmentof music, art, literature, science and *other subjects of acquiring knowledge The four primarily values* of Indian culture i e , religion, salvation, commerce and sex have been assigned the status of equality Indian culture believes that *cultural development is incomplete without the freedom from wants* and desires Indian culture aims at the integral development of man, so that he may be versatile human being

7. *Freedom of Thought and Espression*

Indian thought concerning politics, ethics, economic, philosophy and religion, is multicoloured It proves that Indian culture and way of life permits freedom of thought Freedom of thought is considered as vital to the development of culture as the essence of culture itself Independence of thought has always been *considered a matter of valuable existence Freedom of thought has* enriched Indian culture

Unity in Diversity of Indian Society and Culture

India has a special culture of its own, which has grown, developed and spread in India Indian culture consists of all types of institutional organizations, such as family, religion, ethics, literature, art and philosophy Dr. Radha Kumud Mukerjee says, "Ind. . is a museum of different kinds of sects, customs, religions,

cultures, beliefs, languages, castes and social systems " But inspite of all these apparent diversities and differences there is a unity underlying all these diversities and outer differences. To understand Indian culture, it would be better to understand the unity in diversities of India

Following are the main areas of unity in diversity of India.

I.   GEORGAPHICAL UNITY IN DIVERSITY

Dr. K.L Sharma had discussed the three major geographical divisions of India. They are :

1.   The Himalayas and the Gangetic Plains

The Himalayas separate India from Sinkiang in the extreme south of China and from Tibet The Himalayas are known as the abode of gods and sages Mount- Kailas and Mansarovar lake are considered the holiest of the pilgrimages for Hindus The Ganga and the Sindhu originate from the Himalayas and the Brahamputa from the Tibetan plateau The Himalayas have contributed to a large extent in the development of an Indo-Aryan civilization The outer ranges of the Siwaliks, the first step upward from the plains, are significant for their geological wealth Shimla and Darjeeling are two popular hillstations connecting the plains with the Himalayan mountains

The Hindu Kush range consists of Northern Afghanistan, touching Kabul This range has historical importance as the Aryans and Alexander entered India through this path Several other groups including the Mongols also came to India through this way Kashmir is famous for its scenic beauty. "Kashmir was from early times an influential centre of Hindu culture, it was a home of Sanskrit scholars and poets, it helped in spreading Indian culture to central Asia and produced in Kalhana the only true Indian historian of antiquity" (Gazetteer of India, Vol I) The Brahamputra valley is in the north east It has potencial for the cultivation of tea coffee and fruit This part, surrounded by dense forests bordering Tibet and China, is inhabited by the sub-Himalayan tribes of the Daflas, Abhors, Moubas, Mushms and others

The Ganga plain, the central belt of hills and desert, and the peninsula are the main geographical and cultural parts of the subcontinent At least five important battles were geught in this part of India Delhi is in the south of this tract "In the basin of the Ganga have ever been founded the chief kingdoms of the plains, the most ancient cities, the earliest centres of Indo-Aryan civilization industry and wealth The mighty river has flowed

through the ages in an unceasing process of regeneration of the soil, spreading life and strength among the millions who venerate her as Mother Ganga and purify themselves in its sanctifying waters at the tirthas of Haradvara ((Hardwar), Prayaga and Varanasi " (The Gazetteer of India, Vol I). The land in this basin is extraordinarily fertile with immense agricultural wealth The Ganga, Brahamputra and their tributaries have ensured fertility and wealth from the plains in the north up to the plains of West Bengal The Yamuna, Chambal, Narmada and Son stretch across some parts of the central plains, The Mahanadi irrigates the fertile flats of Orissa The Kaveri, Krishna, Godavari and Periyar flow through the southern states All these rivers have contributed to agricultural prosperity

2. The Aravalli Range

The Aravalli range is the oldest mountain range in western India In the north-west, the Thar desert has protected the country from foreign infiltration The Banas is the well-known river in this part of the state of Rajasthan. The famous salt lake of Sambhar is in the Jaipur district Another range of mountains contains the Vindhyas, connecting the north with the south A number of pre-Aryan tribes, with their distinct cultures and languages, have lived in this distinct rugged mountainous range The Narmada valley connects the Vindhyas on the north with the Satpura Mahadeo-Maikala range on the south The Tapti flows parallel to the Narmada to the west and the Mahanandi to the Bay of Bengal in the east.

3. Peninsular India

Peninsular India consists of Cape Comorin, the Malabar and the Coromandel coasts There are a few good, natural harbours along both coasts Cochin, Goa and Bombay are on the western side, offering safe anchorage for ships Peninsular India developed and maintained a fairly brisk maritime trade with the rest of the world Even the eastern lands, beyond the Bay of Bengal, were colonised by the rulers of the Peninsula Rulers such as the Satavahanas, Pallavas and Cholas maintained a strong navy

Rocks, ranging from the Satmala-Ajanta ranges to the Nilgiris, are a special features of this part of India This is, in fact, a plateau bounded by the Western and Eastern Ghats The state of Karnataka lies between the Eastern Ghats and the Coromandel coast. Tea and coffee are produced in the Kerala- Karnataka region The area has numerous elephents The hill tribes—the Kadar, Muduvar and Pulayan are found in this area

The north of Goa is inhabited by the Marathas (near Poona) Cotton is the main product of this fertile region. Bombay to Agra and Bombay to Poona are the two main road and rail links known as the Thalghat and the Bhorghat, respectively.

Important towns and cities have come up on the banks of rivers, on sea coasts and trade and pilgrim routes This is true about the cities of Patna, Calcutta, Benaras, Hardwar, Bombay, Madras, Surat, Broach, Allahabad, Pondicherry, Goa and many others Trade and political factors contributed to the growth of the cities of Calcutta Bombay and Madras, particularly due to the entry of East India Company in the 16th century.

Despite the variety of topographical and climatic features, India has promoted uniformity of culture. Peninsular India fostered cultural variety and variations among the communities who inhabited the area The north, however, did not remain 'a closed and rigid social formation due to many external influences from the north-west

Hence, India is a naturally rich land having definite territory of its own, like any other nation in the world. The geographical unity of India is a matter of strange observation for the Europeans living in small regions having similar cultural identification They find it difficult to believe as to how the large number of people with so much variety of nature live unitedly.

India that is 'Bharatvarsha' reflects a historical significance and is the symbol of unity From the early times till today every religious thinker, political philosopher and poet, has a deep admiration for this great country, spreading from the Himalayas in the north to the 'Cape Comorin' in the south, as a single expause of Indian Culture and civilization One finds praises or this unified culture, reflected in various shades in the writings of the great saints and poets The kings, who tried to spread their empire from one end to another, have been praised by the poets as well as the great men of the contemporary times There came no ruler from the early days who did not wish to rule country as a whole by expanding his empire.

Today the whole country is called as Mother India with reverence by all the Indians and we feel proud of this amazing soil of ancient culture and civilization. In Mother India we find ourselves connected with one another and another and realise the inherent unity in our innerself.

2. RACIAL UNITY IN DIVERSITIES

Racem, we mean a group of people that have certain physical characteristics in common. Indian society is constituted by a number of races. The races which constitute the Indian society have been classified by a number of sociologists and Anthropologists. We all giving here two most prestigious classifications of Dr. Risley and Dr. Guha.

1. Dr. Risley's Cllasification

The classification from the anthropometric point of view was for the first time attempted by **Sir Herbert Risley**, in the Census of 1901. According to him, the following are the main ethnic groups in the Indian population

(a) The Indo-Aryan—About 75 per cent of the population of India belong to this race. According to Sir Herbert Risley, *this race is found in the East Punjab, Rajasthan and Kashmir Rajputs,* Khattris and Jats are included in it. Tall stature, fair complexion, dark eyes, long head and narrow nose etc., are some of the principal characteristics of this ethnic ground.

(b) The Dravidian—This race inhibits Madhya Pradesh, Chhota Nagpur, Madras and Hyderabad. This is "probably the original type of the population of India and now modified to a *varying extent by the admixture of the Aryans, the Scythians and the Mongoloid elements.*" The physical characteristics of these people are that they are of short stature, very dark complexion, plentiful hair, dark eyes, long head and broad nose. The people of this race are about 20 per cent of the Indian population. This race is well represented by the Paniyans of Malabar and the Santhals of Chhota Nagpur.

(c) Mongoloid—This race is mostly found *in the southern extremity* of Himalayas. The Kanets of Lahul and Kulu. Lepchas of Darjeeling and Sikkim. Bhotias of Almora and the Tharus of Khatima (Nainital) represent this race. The cheif characteristics of these people are that they have broad head, scanty hairs on face, short stature, broad nose, flat face and small eyes.

(d) The Aryo-Dravidian—This race is assumed to be the intermixture of Aryans and dravidians. The people of this type are mostly found in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. The upper strata of this race is represented by Brahmins while the lower strata is represented by Haryans. Long to medium stature, lightish brown to black complexion, plenty hairs on face and medium nose are the chief characteristics of this race.

(e) **The Mongoloid Dravidian**—Dark complexion, broad and round head, plenty hairs on face, medium nose and short stature are some of the chief characteristics of this race This race is well represented by the Brahmins and Kayasthas of Bengal and Orissa

(f) **The Scyho-Dravidian**—According to Sir Herbert Risley, this is the admixture of the Scythians and the Dravidians Saurashtra, Coorg and the Hilly tracts of Madhya Pradesh are inhibited by this race This Scythian elements are more evident in the higher strata of population while the lower strata is dominated by Dravidian elements Lawar stature, fine nose, fair complexion and scanty hairs on body are some principal features of this race

(g) **The Turko-Iranian**—The type, according to Risley does not exist in India It is well represented by the inhabitants of Afghanistan and Baluchistan.

In this classification, Risley does not mention about the existence of Negrito elements in India. But some other writers in their classification, have accepted the existence of Negrito elements in India

2. Dr. Guha's Classification

In the census of 1931, **Dr. Guha** revised the earlier classifications of Indian population According to him the following is the ethnic composition of India

    (1) The Negrito,

    (2) The Proto-Australoid,

    (3) The Mongoloid,

    (4) The Mediterranean

    (5) The Western Brachy Cephals or the Appe Dinaric

    (6) Nordic

(1) **The Negrito**—There have been continued disputes regarding existence of Negrito strains in Indian population Someone finds true Negrito people in the Andaman Islands and in the Bay of Bengal On the other hand some one finds Negrito strains in some of the forest tribes of South India. The Negro indicative such as woolly hair is found among the Kadars and Pulayans of Travancore-Cohin According to haddon Negrito strain is suspected among the Kadars of Deccan Hutton has also given considerable attention to the Negrito problem According to him Negrito substratum is also found in the population of eastern frontier. He mentions that Negrito indicatives are such as *frizzly* hair is found among Angami Naggas of Manipur and Cachar Hills

It is therefore, supposed that at some remote pre-historic times a, Negroid population occupied a great part of Asiatic land specially the southern part. After their arrival, the pre-Dravidians and the Dravidians might have dispersed this primitive population At present they are not found in any strength except in some other tribes. Fine and woolly hairs, pigmy stature, small head, small brow ridges, feeble chins and dark complexion are some of the chief characteristics of the Negrito race

(2) The Proto Australoid—The Proto Australoid or the pre-Dravidians whose ancestors could be traced in Palestine are considered to be the second immigrants Alsmost all the tribal population is dominated by this element For the affinity with the Australians the term Proto-Australoid is used Dark brown complexion, long head, broad and flat nose, wavy and curly hairs, fleshy and everted lips and short stature etc are some of the physical features of this type

(3) The Mongoloid—The Mongoloid people came into India from the north-western China about the middle of the Millenium B C to Tibet and in subsquent centuries they penetrated the plains of North and East Bengal and the hills and the plains of Assam At present there are three tribes of Mongoloid people found in north eastern India, in Assam, Nepal and the part of eastern Kashmir They are divided into the following groups

(a) The Palse Mongoloid—The people of this group are of more flat face, dark to light brown skin This group is known as long headed type It is represented by the Nagas of Himalayan region The other one of this group is broad headed type The Lepachas of Kailmong are also included in this group They have broad head, medium nose and straight hairs

(b) The Tibeto Mongoloid—The main feature of the Tibeto Mongoloid are as follows Broad head, light skin, tall stature, flat and broad nose, absence of hair on body and face The are found in Sikkim and Bhutan

(4) The Mediterranean—The three types namely Negrito, Proto Australoid and the Mongoloid constitute the main tribal population of India In addition to this the general population contains mainly the Mediterranean, the Pipo-Dinaric and Norbic elements Mediterranean is the largest group among these Three distinct types of this race can be traced in India

(a) The Plae Mediterranean—Dark skin, long head, narrow face, broad nose, medium stature, scanty hair growth on

body and face are some of the distinguishable features of this type This type is predominant in Telagu and Tamil Brahmins of South India

(b) **The Mediterranean Type**—This type is responsible for the development of Indus civilization and were subsequently dispersed by the Aryan speaking invaders who came from Northern Mesopotamian region about 2500 B C via Iran to the Gangetic basin and to a smaller extent by the Vindhyas It forms a dominant element in the population of northern India and occupies chiefly the caste of Punjab, Kashmir, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh Dark to brown skin, long head and face, narrow nose, medium tall stature, more growth of hair on face and body, developed chin, large open eyes are some of the chief feature of this types

(c) **The Oriental race or Fishcher (or the Semitic Type)**—The chief concentration of this race has always been in Asia minor and Arabia from where it must have come to India This type resembles the Mediterraneans except in nose formation

(5) **The Western Brachy Cephals (Broad Heads)**—This race came into India from the west and have their association with that of European regions. Therefore, disignated as Alpine. This type is divided into three parts

(a) **The Alpinoids**—Broad head, round face, narrow nose, medium stature and strongly built body are some of the main features of this type moved from southern Baluchistan through Sindh, Saurashtra, Gujarat, Maharashtra into Tamilnadu and Ceylon along the Ganges to Bengal. The Malabar and Andhra country remained unaffected by it At present the people of this group are found in Saurashtra, Gujarat and Bengal The major racial strains of Bengal and Bombay belong to this group

(b) **The Dinaric**—Slightly darker skin, long face, long nose, and tall stature are some of the main characteristics of this type. The presence of this type is marked in Bengal, Orissa and Coorg

(c) **The Armenoids**—White skin, medium to short stature broad head and narrow nose are physical features of this type. The Parsees of Bombay are its true representatives

(6) **The Nordic**—This race came last of all from from the north and belonged th northern steppe folk They swept into northern India during the second Millehium B C. Fair skin, medium to long head, narrow nose and tall stature are some of its physical features This tyhpe is noticed in north India with a marked

admixture with the Mediterraneans This element has now reached into the western side of India as well in East Bengal

Thus the above description shows that the present population os India is an admixture of almost all the races of modern world with some variations due to climate and environmental influences In India, there is considerable overlapping of one area into another Therefore rigid demarcation of races is not yet possible We can demarcate ethnic zones according to the predominance of racial elements The Negrito is almost extinct The Proto-Australoid is found in distant parts almost is secluded areas and in the hilly regions of southern, western and central India The Mongoloid group is not inter mixed with the whole population of north eastern region

The mediterraneans firstly settled in the Indus valley Their settlements and movements were the result of fresh incursions, fights, conquests and defeats But this group and the Alpine group settled and intermixed in the vast northern plains Therefore in Ganges valley we find in the upper portion a dominance of Mediterraneans, while in the lower valley in Begal the Alpo Dinaric element is dominant The Mediterranean and the Alpo-Dinaric groups with some Proto Ausraloid elements later settled down in the southern area of the Vindhyas The Nordic or the Proto Nordic is scarcely found in Decan except in the central region of India

Many different races have invaded India from the very early days and noteworthy among these are *Aryans, Shaka, Huns*, etc , but Indian soil absorbed all their racial dissimilarity and they all became Indians and now if any one attempts to sort out these *invading races,* he will find nothing but frustrations and utter failure Indian social system provided them a big place of cover and solace and as the time passed these different tribes and races established an concrete physical identification with the local culture and civilization after the fall of *Maurya Empire,* so many races, came to India but, when Muslims arrived the faced only one race i e the Hindus and it prooves that the early races of *Negros, Dravidans, Aryans, the Mongols,* the Greeks, the *Yuchi, Skak, Aabhir, the Turks, the Huns,* have lost their individual identity and have been absolutely assimilated into the four varnas of the Indian social system

3. HISORICITY OF UNITY IN DIVERSITY

The Indian cultural tradition is unique The notions of *dharma* (normative order), *karma* (personal moral commitment)

and jati (caste) as the hierarchical principal of social stratification are basic to Indian culture. A certain level of configuration of these elements and consensus has resulted in persistence and equilibrium in Indian society, and hence no major breakdown has taken place in its culture It is said that the change is in the cultural system and not of the system. In other words, basic cultural and social values and norms still continue with some modifications The values of dharma, karma and jati continue to guide social and cultural activities to a large extent. Hence change is in the system and not of the system

The uniqueness of the Indian culture does not simply refer to its esoteric nature. It requires a thorough study of India's culture in terms of its history. Absorption and assimilation are trends of social and cultural cahnge. Aryans and Dravidians lived together. Hindus and Muslims lived in close proximity, socially and culturally. Later on, Christians joined them. Today Hindus, Jains, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians and people of other faiths participate together in the government, industry, commerce and other sectors of public life. Thus, there has been a continuous unity even in the greatest diversity. The diversity is reflected in thousands of caste groups each having its rituals, rites, rules and customs It can be seen in terms of linguistic, religious and other ethnic variations The styles of life differ from region to region and even between different castes and religious groups within the same village The emperor Ashoka worked for the unity of India by achieving cultural and religious harmony and administrative efficiency.

Akbar, one of the most powerful Mughal emperors, projected the concepted of a state religion called Din-i-Illahi, a synthesis of Hinduism and Islam The majority of Muslims in villages transformed their social life beyond recognition They mingled with Hindus freely in almost all walks of life, with the exception of matrimony The Hindu rajas and Musliam kings recognised literary and artistic abilities in individuals from both the communities Kabir and Nanak were greatly influenced by the techings of Islam Conversion to Islam, and later on to Christianity and today to Buddhism has resulted in a "mixed" culture The Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi worked throughout his life to achieve national unity and integrity through communal harmony, upliftment of the poor and downtrodden and propagation of a just social order.

The Colonial India has two histories One, of colonialism produced by the colonisers, and the other of India's culture and

civilization perpetrated through its intellectual and philosophical fervour India's history, its architectural treasures, its literature, philosophy, music, drama, dance, and its other fine arts, all contributed to India's social life, and could not be destroyed by British rule It is this history which remained neglected during British Raj

Mahatma Gandhi desired radical changes However, he wished to associate such changes with India's tradition and cultural heritage Jawaharlal Nehru the architect of Modern India, with a modern and secular outlook, upheld India's past with reverence and a sense of pride He writes: "Yet the past is ever with us and all that we are and that we have comes from the past We are its products and we live immersed in it Not to combine it with the present and extend it to the future, to break from it where it cannot be so united, to make all this the pulsating and vibrating material for thought and action—that is life"

In another passage Nehru highlights India's heritage "The rising middle classes   wanted some cultural roots to cling on to, something that gave them assurance of their own worth, something that would reduce the scene of frustration and humiliation that foreign conquest and rule had produced The past of India, with all its cultural variety and greatness, was a common heritage of all the Indian people, Hindu, Moslem, Christian, and others, and their ancestors had helped to build it" But Nehru never wanted the deadwood of the past to dominate the present He was, in fact a man with a democratic spirit and modern outlook

4. RELIGIOUS UNITY IN DIVERSITY

Religion has played an important part in Indian society from the earliest times It has assumed numerous forms and nomenclatures in relation to different groups of people associated with it India has been a poly-religious society Transformations and changes in different religions have occured from time to time vis-a-vis changes in intellectual climate and social structure Religion in India has never been static Today it has made inroads into the arenas of politics and economic life

Religious movements have been a perpetual feature of India's socio- cultural life Pre-vedic and vedic religion, unorthodox religious currents led by the Buddha and Mahavira, and theistic religions, including the element of Bhakti, emerged from time to time Religious sects like Vaishnavism, Saivism and Saktism emerged as the components of orthodox Brahmanism In addition

to these ramifications of religion several folk cults and religious practices were evolved by different people in various parts of India

According to the 1931 census there were ten religious groups in India These were Hindus, Jains, Buddhists, Zoroastrians, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Jews and other tribal and non-tribal religious groups The census of 1961 listed only seven religious categories. Hindus, Jains, Buddhists, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs and other religions and persuasions. Religion is really a complex phenomenon in India For example, elements of Sanskritic and tribas religion are found in a mixed form at various levels So is the interaction between the 'great' and the 'little' traditions Integration of Sanskritic Hindu religion and tribal religion is also found Santhals, for example, observe several high caste festivals This is also the case with the lower and "untouchable" castes. Some tribals worship

People of all religion live on the pious land of India. Religious differentiation is only external in nature The Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Parsee's Buddhists and other religious communities live in this country. Inspite of this diversity in religious belief, every Indian does not find his religious view apart from others. Each religion in our country exhibits one single feeling, each believes in the immortality of soul, temporary existence of this physical world, nirvana, and contemplation and this is all the ideas falling within the lap of religions in our country Though all the religions take different ways to accomplish their objectives which is same, for all and every religion embodies faith in inbisible God, purity of thought benevalence, and pity as the true characteristics of every individual No religion teaches curelty or selfishness Nearly evey religion has its rituals and observance of certain norms Such rituals and norms are nearly common in all the religions Worshippers of one God or Goddess have errected the temples to offer their prayers for instance the *Shiva* and *Vishnu*, *Krishna* and *Rama* temples are found in nearly every corner of the country No one comes into the conflict of the other The great legendary epics, the *Geeta*, the *Ramayana*, and the *Mahabharata* is read as well in Punjab as in the Southern part of the country People offer their prayers by singing legendary prayers of *Rama* and *Krishna* and people speaking all the languages repent these songs with equal reverence.

'Religious equality in our country is still safe, and the religious traits established by the Aryans are still accepted in our society Indian society has been unique in the world history because

of its continuity on the one hand and its vast diversity on the
other The archeological investigations of *Harappa* and
Mohanjodaro, popularly described as the Indian Valleyh
Civilization, established that civilization had attained a high
degrees of maturity round about B C 3,000 So one can infer that
the beginning of this civilization may even go back by about 500
years, in order to achieve that state of urban development and
complexity which has been revealed by the archeological remains
Later archeological findings have shown that the remains of the
civilization extend as far east, as the Sutlej Valley in Jaisalmer in
Rajasthan and as far south as Lothal near Ahmedabad Thus this
civilization was not confined to the Indus Valley but extended
further east and south Some of the Indian historians assert that
many of the main features of Indian culture have been derived
from this civilization They note that some forms of dress, utensils
and pottery which are to be found in contemporary India may be
traced to the Mohanjodaro days It is also suggested that some of
the current religious beliefs like *the cult of the mother goddess,
the worship of Shiva and the reverence for the Cow*, could be traced
back to that civilization It is also asserted that the pacifist temper
of the Indian people could be traced to that civilization   thus
it could be said that the Indian civilization could claim a continuity
of about 5,500 years which is unique in the history of man

The religious texts impart much satisfaction and solace to
the people in our country The places of worship scattered all over
the country signify the religious unity among the people belonging
to the Hindu Community, Likewise, Ajmer symbolises the feeling
of unity among Muslims living in India and enjoins them with
other people belonging to other religious sects This inculcaets the
feeling of unity and patriotism among the Indian people Rivers in
India like the Ganges, Yamuna, Godavari, Saraswati, Narbada all
symbolises the ancient culture and their names often appear in
the prayer This again bind the people living in different parts and
following distinct religious faiths

In short religion binds the people living in the country of
ours and has helped in strengthening the forces bringing integrity
and unity in the Indian social system What Ruth Benedict wrote
is true of Indian religion

Religion is not to be indentified with the pursuit of ideal
ends Spirituality and the virtues are two social values which were
discovered in the process of social life They may well constitute
the value of the religion in man's history just as the pearl

constitutes the value of the oyster. Nevertheless the making of the pearl is a byproduct in the life of oyster, and it does not give a clue to the evolution of the oyster

5. LINGUISTIC UNITY IN DIVERSITY

India is a house of a number of languages Language is an important element of culture

Language is also a social phenomenon in terms of its differential association with different social strata Some people have command over both written and oral aspects of a given languages, while others, being simple folks, have access only to the oral aspect Sanskritic language or any other language may become a resource for some people, whereas a lack of knowledge of the same may prove an obstacle in social and cultural mobility A linguistic group or collectivity becomes, at times, a strong primordial entity, and may turn into a sort of ethnic or communal group in opposition to some such other group

Language is a living force, it is not a static phenomenon It has changed with changes in social formations, ruling clans and with demands of specific historical situations Pali and prakrit languages were prominent in ancient India Sanskrit enjoyed the stauts of carrying Hindu Sanskrit culture throughout the country These were followed by modern Indo-Aryan languages : Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kashmir, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, Sindhi and Urdu The languages in peninsular India are of Dravidian stock (with the exception of Marathi) These include Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannada Each of these languages, of both the stocks, have several dialects spoken by people living in different linguistic regions

The rulers of medieval India brought new forms of religion, language, manners and customs compared to those of the orthogenetic culture and civilization The institutional basis of social order and economic organisation remained unchanged to a large extent The caste system and village economy continued to function undisturbed during the medieval period However, Indian culture and political power underwent transformation, influencing language, cuoture and religion A "Hindustani" way of life emerged in Northern India The writings and accounts of foreign travellers from Islamic countries promoted Arabic and Persian languages The Hindu culture, caste system and village economy remained undisturbed despite foreign rule The Indo-Aryan languages rapidly developed into literary languages With the emergence of these languages, cultural changes occured, including diminishing upper

caste domination, the decline of Sanskrit language, and waves of religious and social reform using popular idioms and the language of laity "The confrontation of Hindu and Muslim cultures led to intersting results and a mixed culture", particularly in the North India Language is a very sensitive aspect of people's lives When, in accordance with the Official Languages Act of 1963 Hindi was declared the official language of India, serious riots broke out on 26 January 1965 in Tamil Nadu and spread to other non-Hindi speaking states Consequently, English was retained as an associate language for as long as the non-Hindi speaking people wanted it The three- language fromula was introduced at this juncture

We may sum up by stating that language, like enthmiety and region, is a primordial basis of collectivity and, therefore, it plays the same kind of role in various sectors of social life including social ranking, economic development, education and politics Language, being a cultural phenomenon, becomes a very sensitive issue on many occasions language disputes and riots have at times threatened national unity and solidarity The three-language formula was introduced as a device to minimise such problems, and to strengthen the forces of national unity and integrity Language, as a means of communication and accretion of knowledge, should not be allowed to become an instrument of power in a few hands It should be accessible to all those who wish to learn that particular language

6. CULTURAL UNITY IN DIVERSITY

Despite the visible differences between customs and traditions, one finds a fundamental cultural unity in our country among the different communities and human groups The mark of this unity can be found in the literature from the early ages The approach to literature, traditions and customs and philosophy is fundamentally Indian in its sentiment A clear cultural unity is found among the people though they practise different religious rites, and have different social inter-course Cultural unity is a force behind all the group activities There exists no group which does not accept the nature of family and *sanctity* of *Sanskaras* Not only this, but many of the festivals are celebrated throughout the country in the same manner which reflects the bond of unity existing among the people belonging to different sects Behind all the *group expressions* and *sectional activities*, there lies the bond of cultural unity

The transition of the Indian society from *Sanskritization* to *Secularization* has not affected the cultural unity 'British rule

brought with it a process of secularization of Indian social life and culture, a tendency that gradually became stronger with the development of communications, grewth of towns and cities, increased spatial mobility, and the spread of education. The two World Wars, and Mahatma Gandhi's civil disobedience campaigns, both of which socially and politically mobilized the masses, also contributed to increased secularization. And with independence there began a deepening as well as a broadening of the secularization process as witnessed in such measures as the declaration of India as a Secular State, the constitutional recognition of the equality of all citizens before the law, the introduction of universal adult suffrage, and undertaking of a programme of planned development. Thus the cultural unity in India was unaffected during the period of transition

7. POLITICAL UNITY IN DIVERSITY

Political unity in the country is an out come of the religious and cultural unity that has been prevalent since the time immemorial History has facts in its store to prove that in early days many princes and kings rebelled against the central authority, but every rebel realised the importance of the universal overlordship (i s Chakra Varti), and such incidents are authortically proved by the vedic literatures in which kings had tried to become universal overlords *(Chakra Varti)* by conquerring more and more territory Notable among these kings are *Prabhu Dilip, Aj,* Dashrath, Sagar, Mandhata, and Pandav king Yudhisthira Many instances are present in the ancient literatures to prove that kings tried to annex more territory to acquire the title of universal overlord The desire behind such attempts of annexation were not notivated by the acquisition of wealth or psychological arrogance but to unite the whole of India into one unit of rule There is no instance which could prove that any Indian king ever tried to annex the territory of any foreign ruler, but all the facts prove that kings wanted to expand their kingdom as far as possible in their bid to bring more and more Indian territory under a single control Ashvamedha Yagya was performed by *Chandra Gupta, Ashok* and *Samudra Gupta* to their entity as the Universal Lord The idea of universal lordship an actual happening since many synonymous words are found in the vedic literature as well as there is reference of *Ashvamedha Yagya,* too, which clearly indicates the aspiration of great kings to unite the country as far as they could in their bid to bring political unity thought a few got success

Factors of Disunity

Despite a rich cultural heritage, egalitarian policies and programmes, and 'rule of law', narrow loyalties, parochial ties and primordial interests have increased in the post-independence India. We find today divisive forces operative in many parts of India. India is a land of sharp contrasts—very rich, upper caste and class people on the one hand, and extremely poor, lower caste and class people are found on the other There are people belonging to different casts, religions and linguistic groups spread all over the country

There are minority groups based on vanity of considerations such as religion, language, region, custom and traditions Even the so-called majority group, the Hindus, are divided into several sects, casts, clans and linguistic groups These groups have certain aspirations for their members in regard to better education, employment and a certain standard of living All members belonging to different castes and communities do not have equal chance or access, and hence they are denied "distributive justice" Such a situation of unequal opportunities in life, which itself is rooted into socially structured inequalities, aggravates tensions, mutual distrust and frustrations

The consciousness of unity and feeling of Indianness is seriously hampered due to such situations Today India is faced with this problem due to a lack of synchronisation between the form and contents of its social structure There is an urgent need to reduce the hiatus between the ideal and the actual National integration can be achieved by bridging up this gap, which is, in fact, between the strong and the weak, the rich and the poor, the educated and the uneducated and between the upper caste and class and the lower caste and class people

Forces of Unity in Modern India

M.N Srinivas writes, "The concept of unity is inherent in Hinduism There are sacred centres of Hindu pilgrimage in every corner of the land. Certain salient aspects of Sanskritic culture are to be found all over the country India is the sacred land not only of the Hindus but also of the Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists The Muslims and other Christians, too, have several sacred centres of pilgrimage in India The institution of caste cuts across diverse religious groups and gives them all a common social idiom"

Srinivas further notes that India, as a secular state, tolerates diversity The Five Year Plans, the spread of egalitarian ideals, a single government and a common body of civil and criminal laws are enough evidence of India's plural character and oneness

However, one may not agree with Srinivas' observation regarding Hinduism in general and about the caste system, in particular. Orthodoxy of these two systems has, at times, endangered India's unity The two have often been misused for suppressionand exploitation of weaker sections of society, including women

The Constitution of independent India has established the "rule of law" throughout the entire country. All citizens are equal and subject to the same authority. Birth-based pribileges have been abolished Religion, language, region, caste or community are no longer the basis of special powers and privileges The weaker sections of society, the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and the other Backward Classes have been given special concessions to bridge the gap between them and the upper castes and classes. Today, no caste or social group suffers any kind of social disability. Women enjoy equal rights with men, in all respects The policy of "divide and rule", adopted by the British to rule this country, is no more in operation Colonial explotiation has been replaced by processes of development and egalitarian ideology

The diversity of race, language, religion and social customs is an important feature of Indian culture, but more important and intersting than diversity is its underlying fundamental unity Indians are of different races but the climate and geographical isolation of India have developed in them some subtle common facial expressions which distinguish them from the peoples of other countries

Hence, India can rightly be characterised as a society having unity in diversity and diversity in unity. as it is a plural society both in letter and spirit Despite innumerable odds India has maintained its unity in ancient, medieval and modern India We find unity in all its historical and ultural facts India is today a secular state It has one constitution and rule of law for all the people living in different regions, speaking different languages and believing in different religions and faiths Today Hindus, Jains, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians and people of other faiths participate together in administration, politics and public life Ethnic, linguistic and relisation of the common, national goals The culture heritage of India has been a living example of the synthesis of different cultures. All the religions have promoted cultural synthesis

2

CONCEPTS

KARMA, PUNRJANAM, PURUSHARTHA,
VARNASHARAM VYASTHA & SANSKAR

Indian society has been unique in world history because of its value system The sutudy of values is a very fruitful approach to the understanding and predition of social behaviour and social institutions In order to interpret concrete behaviour one must have a knowledge of the basic assumptions of the people, their preferences or values

The traditional value system of Indian society were laid down by the ancient Indian thinkers These include, Karma and Punarjanma, Purushartha, Varna, Ashrma Vyavshtha and Sanskar These will be briefly discussed in this chapter

Karma & Punarjanma

The doctrine of Karma is reckoned as one of the most significant contributions of Indian philosophy This doctrine was propounded for the first time under the Upanishads Its influence has existed in different phases and aspects of Indian life Its strong influence pervades over the Indian philosophy, literature and culture etc Almost all the aspects of Indian life have adopted the conception of 'Karma' in some or the other way Although, the Budhism and Jainism oppose the Vedic conventions and traditions from many points of view and refuse to accept the supremacy of the Brahmins in the social set up, yet they also recognize the supremacy of the doctrine of Karma so far as material aspects of life is concerned In fact, the doctrine of Karma is such a doctrine that it can be regarded the meeting point of the contradictory view-points and system It manifests the practical uniformity of the Hindusim, Jainism, Budhism,

Philosophical Bases of the Doctrine of Karma—According to Hindu philosophy, attainment of salvation (Moksha) is the ultimate goal of the human life. It comprises the supreme eternal value, The Buddhist philosophy has called this ultemate goal as Nirvana. The Mahanirvana Tantra observes "That which leads to salvation (Nirvana) is also productive of the fulfilment of dharma, arth and karma" Thus salvation comprises all the values of life. Bhagwat Geeta has mentioned three means for the attainment of salvation Karm Marg (path of duty) Gyan Marg (path of knowledge) and Bhakti Marg (path of devotion)

On the contrary, the Buddhist philosophy has laid down the eight-fold ways for the attainment of Nirvana The Buddhists believe that man can get rid of birth and rebirth by following eightfold path According to Bhagwat Geeta one who performs his

duty disinterestedly is a great man. In view of its importance and universality certain exponents of the doctrine of 'Karma' have regarded Karma as God. The belief of the people in public life is also in consonance with this doctrine. In other words, doctrine of 'Karma' insists on individual responsibility towards good and bad results. It holds that every action has its own effect. Man cannot avoid the results, of his actions. As we sow, so we reap. Good actions bring good results, while evil results ensure from evil actions. Hence, the man becomes good by his good action and bad by his bad actions.

Performance of prescribed action produces merit (Punya). On the other hand, performance of forbidden actions produces demerit (Pap) As pertinently remarked by Jaunath Sinha, "Merit and demerit are agencies (Adarsha) which nurture in course of time and bear fruits either in this life or in future life. They are predisposing causes of happiness and misery, while external objects are their exciting causes there is no escape from the consequences of actions" Thus, according to this doctrine, our present is the direct outcome of our past deeds. Hence, in order to understand the doctrine of 'Karma' it is first necessary to clarify the meaning of Karma

Meaning of Karma—The word 'Karma' has been derived from its Sanskrit root 'Kra' wich implies all kinds of activities For example Karma includes activities such as to sit, to stand, to laugh, to speak, to determine, to prohibit, to give charity etc. The word 'Karma' has been used in Bhagwat Geeta in this general sense. According to Geeta, man can attain salavation by performing his prescribed Karma Karma in this context represents duty. On the other hand Karma according to philosophy of yoga Vashistha, is the activity of 'Manas'. Karma generates the Karta and the Karta by its activity again produces Karma. Thus, the seed of Karma is to be sought in Manas Besides this meaning of the word 'Karma' so far as the question of the Karma done by the man is concerned, the following four things deserves special mention :

(1) Karta, who does Karma through his activity,

(2) Circumstance in which Karma is performed,

(3) Inspiration for Karma, and

(4) Re-action or results produced by Karma

It is as a result of these elements that Karma is performed.

Concept of Karmaphal (results of action)—While on the one hand the word Karma indicates the performance of some action,

on the other hand it also indicates the action produced by the Karma Secondly, according to Hindu philosophy, each Karma (action) generates a definite result and that is why each man is a builder of his own fate. *He gets the results according to his actoins* That is to say, as we sow, so we reap. According to Hindu philosophy, the main aim of man's life is to remove the effects of bad actions of earlier life and to attain salvation Dr P.N Prabhu has also pointed out that according to Hindu view point, the birth of each man takes place so that he may remove the effects of the bad actions of his earlier life and may attain salvation. Further, according to Hindu viewpoint, man should not do such actions as may affect his future life

Under the Hindu philosphy the conception of Karmaphal is very significant. It recognizes that each action generates a definite result The present life of man is the result of 'Karmaphal' of his earlier life. Similarly his future life is based on the 'Karmaphal' of the present life In other words words man is born alone, dies alone and has himself to undergo the results of his bad and good actions, as the case may be

Karma and Punarjanma (re-birth)—The tenents of Karma and re-birth are in their based upon the theory of survival of the soul upon the death of the body. Soul is immortal and indestructible When the boddy perishes it enters in another body and thus goes on living. The 'Jiva' or soul during the evolution of birth and re-birth accumulates Karma Thus, "It earns for all its pain, and enormous ever increasing credit and debt account in the Karma Bank and goes on round operating upon it. Action good or bad brings on its trial, reward and punishment and there is no escape from it Thus, soul is inevitably tied to wheel and helplessly turns over successive re-births, reaping the fruits of past Karma and prepetually sowing more seeds of Karma and thus prepeting its bondage

Important elements of the doctrine of Karma—There are many important elements of the doctrine of Karma It is, therefore, necessary to discuss these elements separately in order to understand the doctrine of Karma The more important elements are the following ·

(1) **Definite result**—By Karma, we do not mean only physical action. It also includes mental, emotional and spiritual *activities* Each action has a definite result and man gets this result either in this life or in his future life

(2) **Immortality**—Since each action has a definite result, therefore, man can neither escape from the result of his action nor can he achieve the results without performing the action Man cannot destroy the results of his action Present life of man is result of his earlier actions

(3) **Continuity**—According to the doctrine of Karma, the process of Karma is not limited The cycle of Karma is infinite or unlimited It is the cycle which goes on eternally and each man has to face the results of his actions Hence, it has also been called 'Karma Vipak'. According to 'Karma Vipak', once the cycle of Karma starts, it goes on perpetually. Even when there is annihilation of the universe, the Karma continues to exist or survives in the form of seeds Then there is again creation of the universe

(4) **Indestructibility of Karma**—According to the doctrine of Karma, the result of Karma (actions) is indestructible. 'Karamaphal' (result of the action) influences the character, ideas and feelings of the result individual It continues with him throughout his life It even continues in his next life Man has to face the actions of today or tomorrow and those of tomorrow the day after tomorrow and so on. According to Mahabharat, Karamphal does not with the individual concerned but sometimes his descendants have also to face the result of his actions

That is why if the results, of his action do not come in his life, time, then they influence his sons and grand-sons etc. In the practical life also, it is the belief of the people that the bad actions of man influence his future generations The interpretation of such type of public beliefs can be given on the basis of the doctrine of Karma. Thus, according to the doctrine of Karma, each action has definite result As we sow, so we reap According to Geeta . "Man himself faces the results of his actions, and enjoys happiness or suffers in accordance with his actions"

Along with his conception of the doctrine of Karma, the conception of religion has also been connected Man moves towards the path of religion by doing good actions. On the contrary, all actions, have been regarded as synonymous of piety and bad actions of sin as the case may be In the Pauranic literature, the imagination of Heaven and Hell is also connected with Karma According to Rigveda, persons doing good actions reside in Heaven, or we may say that it is only through the performance of good actions that man enters the Heaven On the contrary, persons who do bad action go to hell

(5) **Immortality of soul**—The doctrine of Karma accepts the immortality and indestructibility of soul Soul is immortal It is only the body which is subject to death or decay Therefore, creature is born according to results of his actions and then after leaving this body adopts new body in its re-birth This cycle of birth and re-birth moves on continuously till the attainment of salavation This doctrine along with the immortality of soul also indicates the indestructibility of Karamaphal or result of the action There are some actions, the results of which does not end in ones life. Consequently the creature becomes a subject to the cycle of birth and re-birth. According to Jatak Text, horoscope of the next life is ready at the time of the death of the culture Thus, the doctrine of Karma is based on the conception of the immortality *and in destructibility of the soul*

(6) **Determination of life conditions**—The doctrine of Karma endeavours to clearify the present conditions and circumstances of life according to the results of the actions performed in the early life in the practical life The circumstances and conditions of each individual are different from other individuals Some individuals are rich some are poor, some are happy while others are leading miserable lives All this is determined by the results of the action performed by the individual in his earlier life. As the actions of each individual are not similar, similarly the conditions of circumstances of each individual are different from others

According to some scholars, the Indian concept of caste system is also connected with the conception of 'Karmaphal' Man does not rebel against the existing complex circumstances of life because he considers them to be the result of the actions performed by him in his earlier birth, Secondly, under the caste system, keeping this in view the exploited castes did not resort to social revolt against their life conditions and circumstances Thus the doctrine of Karmaphal played a very important role in giving a definite shape or form to Indian social organization

(7) **Sum total of Karmaphal**—According to the doctrine of Karma, man has to face the result of his actions in two eays i.e., during the intervals of several deaths, man has first to under go the pleasures and comforts etc similar to that of Heaven or to suffer miseries similar to that of hell in accordence with his actions After this period, he gets the body according to his actions Prosperity and poverty, happiness and misery etc are all determined according to the results of the actions Besides this,

the hereditary features of man are also determined in accordance with the results of his actions. Thus, the doctrine of Karma is connected with three lives of man. The present life of the man is considered to be the result of the actions performed by him in earlier life. The future life of the man is regarded to be the result of the actions performed by him in the present life.

(8) **Supremacy of Karma**—According to the above discussion, Karma determines the nature of life. However, it does not imply that the doctrine of Karma interprets clearly that the creature is in the present life in accordance with the result of his actions. Therefore, it is sometimes doubted that the doctrine of Karma makes a man fatalistic. But this conception is completely baseless. The doctrine of Karma does not make a man fatalistic but it rather interprets that man is the maker or builder of his own destiny. He can cange his destiny by his actions. He can determine his future. This doctrine also clearly points out that each man gets the adequate reward of his actions. There is no such action as may not produce any result. From this point of view life is an opportunity for man to perform actions. Thus, earth is his land of duty. Wisdom is said to be the director of the actions. That is why, when after the achievement of the Heaven, the result of good actions beings to end, then the creature has again to take birth on earth.

(9) **Inspiration of good actions**—While on the one hand the doctrine of Karma emphasizes that each produces a definite result and it must but produce because a result. On the other hand, it also indicates that the result of bad actions can be removed and if not at least be modified by good actions. Hence, the Hindu religious texts have mentioned many divices of such activities as produce good results, for example, meditation, fast, self-control, charity etc. Through the performance of such activities, man can remove or atleast modify the results of his bad actions. According to manu, man can lessen the effects of his sins or bad actions by performance of good actions such as self-control. Study of Vedic Texts. Yajna, charity, meditation etc. In this way, the doctrine of Karma inspires man to do good actions. This doctrine clearly points out that man is the manker or builder of his own destiny. He can determine the nature and the form of his future life on the basis of his action.

Kinds of Karma

According to Bhagwat Geeta, "Knowledge, the object of knowledge and knower—these are three-fold incentives to actions

and the doer, the action and the organ of action—These are the three-fold constituents of action." On this basis knowledge of action may be calssified into three classes That knowledge by which man sees one imperishable entity in all beings is known as sattvic and that knowledge which regards the manifold existence of various kinds in alll beings as separate is known as 'Rajas'. Further that knowledge which clings to one individual, as if there were the whole, that is called as Tamasic. According to these three types of knowledge, actions have also been classified as follows :

(1) Sattvic,

(2) Rajasic,

(3) Tamasic.

(1) **Sattvic Karma**—According to Bhagwat Geeta, "That action which is prescribed by scriptures and which is done without the sence of doership, and without passion or prejudice, by one who does not seek its fruits, is said to be Sattvic.

(2) **Rajasic**—That action which involves much strain and is done by one who seeks enjoyment and is prompted by egoism, is declared to be Rajasic

(3) **Tamasic**—That action which is undertaken through ignorance, without considering the result, loss to oneself and injury to others and one's own capacity, is declared to be Tamasic.

Similarly, the doer is said to be Sattvic if he is free from the attachment and is unaffected by successes or failure The dore is said to be Rajasic if he is greedy and seeks the fruit of actions Further a doer is said to be Tamasic, if he is slothful, despondent and procrastinating

Besides this qualification, Karma can be classified into three categories from the point of view of 'Karma Vipak'—(i) Accumulated Karma, (ii) Destined Karma, and (iii) Accumulating Karma

Accumulated Karma—The actions performed in the earlier life are said to be accumulated Karma These actions are Karma and are also, called 'Adrasta' (unseen) The accumulated actions can be either good or bad Hence the relusts of the actions which the man has to face first are called destined Karma On the contrary, the actions which are being performed in the present and those actions which are to be performed in future are called accumulating actions According to Chatterji and Datta, there are mainly two meanings of the word 'Karma' The first meaning indicates the rule of Karma, whereas the second meaning indicates the strength, capacity and power produced by it and the results of

the action ensures from this strength, capacity or power. From the point of view of the results of the actions, the actions are called accumulated, destined or accumulating.

VARIOUS DOCTRINES OF KARMA

Various doctrines of Karma have been propounded by different scholars The more important among them are being discussed below

(1) **Doctrine of Manu**—There is a vivid description of the doctrine of Karma in manusmriti. In India, 'Manusmriti' was printed for the first time in 1913 A.D. in Calcutta. In Rigveda, Manu, the father of the human race did not write the present 'Manusmriti' but with a view to give it antiquity and authenticity this text has been said or described to have been written by Manu.

According to Manu, all types of actions (Karma) are the offshoots of mind, body and speech. Good actions produce good effects and bad actions produce evil effects Man receives all results accordingly According to Manau, to think or desire bad of others, the feeling to have things of others and the feeling to disbelief towards the next world or the world to come are connected with mind Therefore, such type of actions are called sinful actions (Papa Karma) Backbiting, untruthful speech, useless talks are connected with speech (Vanee) Hence, such type of actions are called 'Vachik Papa Karma', Similarly, to obtain money of others unjustly and to have illicit connection with other women are connected with body Such types of actions are, therefore, called physical sinful actions. Thus according to Manu, all types of actions ensue from mind, body and speech. The result of these actions have also to be faced by man through mind, body and speech

According to Manu, man is born in the 'Yoni' of trees etc. in consequence of his bad actions As a result of bad actions or sinful actions ensuing from speech in the earlier life, man is born as a bird or animal Similarly, he is born as 'Shudra' (chandal) as a result of bad actions of mind Therefore, according to Manu, man should attach more significance to Sattvic actions, less to Rajasic actions and the least to Tamasic actions The study of Vedas, acquiring knowledge, control over senses, religious activities etc., are Sattvic actions Impatience, sensuality etc , are Rajasic actions. Greed, cruelty etc , are Tamasic actions Any one, who performs Sattvic actions receives good results and is said to be entitled to attain divine pleasure, similar to that of the Gods One who performs Rajasic actions is born as human being One who performs Tramasic actions goes down in his position Hence according to

Manu, man should mostly do such actions as are prescribed by the 'dharma'

In his discussion, Manu has also referred to the auspicious and best actions The study of Vedas acquiring of knowledge, Tapa, service to Guru, control of senses etc are called auspicious actions, Actions which are performed with a view to achieve some results are called 'Pravritti' actions and the actions which are performed whithout hoping for any results are called 'Nivritti' Salavation can be attained through the performance of Nivritti actions Similarly, one who studies throughly is greater than one who can simply read it and so on Hence, inclination is the basis of other things Man can attain salvation through it

(2) Doctrine of Yajnavalkya—The name of Yajnavalkya is prominent among the thinkers and scholars of Vedic Rishi traditions There is a great similarity in the ideas of Manu and Yajnavalkya in regard to form of Karma and Karmaphal According to Yajanavalkya man attain Dharma and Adharma due to accumulation of actions and as a result of it man attains his position The position of actions have been divided into the following three categories

    (1) Birth in high and low caste

    (2) Attainment of long or short life

    (3) Getting of happiness or misery

Man is born in high family gets long life and happiness as a result of good actions On the contrary he is born in a low family and gets misery and short life as a result of bad actions Therefore, man should accumulate such actions as may led to his birth in high and noble family, long life and happiness

According to Yajnavalkya, Dharma is nothing but the performance of good action This is different for the persons living in different Ashramas The Dharma of Kshatriya is to protect the people The Dharma of Vaishya is to do trade and commerce and that of the Shudra is to serve the other three classes If persons of any of the said classes deviate from their religion, then it is the duty of the king towards their suitable punishment so as to compel to follow their Dharma

(3) Doctrine of Shukranitisar—According to Shukranitisar, man's present life is the result of the actions performed by him in his earlier life Beside this, man's life conditions of human beings are based on fate and human actions Action can be divided into two categories The first category

comprises of the actions which have been performed in the present life and the second category of actions are those which have been performed in earlier births Thus, two types of actions determine the present conditions of the man's life Although, under this doctrine it has been admitted that life conditions of human beings are also determined by fate, yet it does not mean that man should make his best possible efforts and do good actions to achieve progress in life and to change his circumstances

(4) Doctrine of Patanjali : Yoga Sutra—The ideas connected with this doctrine have been propounded by Patanjali. According to Patanjali illiteracy is the root cause of all miseries In this connection, it is worth mentioning that illiteracy does not here mean lack of knowledge but its main untruthfulness and false knowledge According to Patanjali, there are 4 kinds illiteracies : (i) Asmati, (ii) Raga, (iii) Dvesha, and (iv) Avhiniversha

'Asmati' means giving too much significance to one's own self 'Raga' means inclination towards the enjorment of wordly things 'Dvesha' means hateful renunciation of painful thing 'Abhinivesha' means love of life and fear of death. As a consequence of these 4 types of illiteracies man perofrms bad actions and naturally gets the results accordingly. Therefore, in order to remove thete miseries it is necessary to remove illiteracy

According to Patanjali, the only way to get rid of the cycle of death and birth, is to acquire knowledge Under the acquirement of knowledge, the results of the actions do not end But as a result of them the effects of the said actions are minmmised By 'Yogi', we mean that person who perform actions without hoping to achieve its results Besides this, Karma Yogi is that man who performs actions and at the same time renounces his right over the result of the said actions Therefore, according to Patanjali, when man performs actions with the hope to achieve its results then he cannot get rid of the cycle of birth and death Only those persons who perform actions without hoping its results and renounce their right over it, can achieve salvations

(5) Jainism—The Jains deny the sanctity of the Vedas but admits the existence of soul The Jainism believes that soul can 'be liberated through the strict observance of the precepts of the Jainas, Only through this medium, soul can be relieved from the bondage of Karma

The Jainism believes in an impersonal law of Karma. It adjusts the physical order to the moral order. The Jain philosophy recognizes the soul (Jiva) and non-soul (Ajiva) The soul is eternal

and the non-soul is matter Karma is also a subtle matter, which enters into the soul The soul becomes active as a result of its association with Karma It becomes free from Karmas of it reaches to the stage of perfection

(6) Buddhism—Buddhism also denies the sanctity of the Vedas It opposes all the rites rituals and worships prescribed by the Vedas but is admits the existence of external and internal soul object According to Buddhism, all suffering is due to greedy desires of individual His life is trouble and his end is sorrow In other words, main is compelled for Karma due to his desire Further, all Karma, good or bad cause continued existence, the good causing rebirths in a world of happiness and evil in the words of suffering Therefore, in order to bring existence to an end, it is necessary to get rid of all Karmas, good and bad This can be done by completely destroying the predispositions of karma When Karma is destroyed, desire, the source of Karma is, also destroyed When a man will be able to do this Buddha says, he will attain Nirvana a state which there is no misery and no rebirths

According to Buddha, action leads a man to rebirth There is continuity of rebirth New act arises as soon as old act dies The Buddha says, "By Karma the world exists' by Karma mankind exists, being are bound by Karma as the linch pin of a chariot It applies to the chain of causation As a result of Karma, there if variety in the world Every phenomena of the world is governed by the law of Karma

(7) Doctrine of Vedanta Philosophy—According to this doctrine Karma occupies a prominent position in human life It is only according to the actions of Karma, man acquires body Therefore, the existence of body is the result of fate and actions According of Vedanta Karma can be divided into three categories

(1) Accumulated Karma,

(2) Destined, Karma, and

(3) Accumulating Karma

By accumulated Karma, we mean the action accumulated in earlier lives Destined Karmas means those accumulated actions of the previous birth's whose results the creature is facing in the present life Accumulating Karmas means those actions which are accumulating in the present life and the result of which will come in the life to come In order to remove the bad effects of the accumulating Karma, acquirement of knowledge is necessary but in every condition the soul (Jive) has to undergo its result Along with the end of the distinct actions, the physical body also ends

The salvation is that stage where distinct action end The person who attains this stage during life time is called Videha'. Thus, according to Vedanta philosophy, the soul has to face compulsory result of distinct actions When man performs actions interestedly, then the stage of bondage arises from it but when he perform actions disinterestedly and aquires knowledge, then he attains salvation In other words, in order to attain salvation man should perform actions disinterestedly According to Vedanta death of man is certain and inevitable Hence he should perform actions disinterestedly According to Swami Vivekananda, actions performed with a sense of dedication and service is the real worship of God This is the basis man's salvation

(8) Doctrine of Karmayoga—The highest esoteric explanation of Karma is found in Geeta The manner in which Geeta describes in terms of duty is hardly found in any other scripture For the realization of God, Geeta has laid two principal ways (i) Sankhyayoga, and (ii) Karmayoga In Sankhyayoga—the doer regards all the objects as 'unreal and establishes indentity with all pervading God. On the other hand, in Karmayoga, the doer maintains equality between success and failure, renounces attachment with the desire for fruit He surrenders himself to God through mind, speech and body.

The result of both these practices being one, they are regard as one in reality But a person cannot tread both the paths at one and the same time For instance Karmayoga cannot be practised in the stage of Samnyasa, for in that stage renunciation of Karma in every form has been advised The practice of Sankhyayoga, however, is possible in every Ashrama or stage of life. According to Geeta, the practitioner qualified for the pathe of Sankhya, should be devoided of indentification with the body, the practice of Sankhyayoga is difficult while the path disintereted Karmayoga is easier The chief characteristics of the doctrine of Karmayoga are as follows

(A)   Immortality of Soul—According to the Bhagvadageeta, the soul is never born nor dies, nor does it exist on coming into being For it is urban, eternal, ever lasting and primeval, even though the body is slain, the soul is not As a man discarding worn-out cloths takes other new ones, likewise the embodied soul casting off wornout bodies enter into others which are new. Therefore knowing this as such every one should perform his duty in accordance to religion It thus inspire man towards disinterested action

(B) Right to action only—According to Geeta, "Your right is to work only, but never to the fruit therefore Let not the fruit of action be your object, nor let your attachment to be inaction" Hence man should perform his duties being indifferent to success and failure Those people are poor and wretched who crave for fruit of action while those who renounce the fruit of actionm attain the blissful supreme state

(C) Detachment and Disinterested Action—Further, according to Geeta, "Man does not attain freedom from action without entering upon action, nor does he reach perfection merely by renunciation of action" It is because none can i main inactive even for a moment Every one is driven to action by nature-born qualities Man cannot maintain his body without action He is bound by the shackles of Karma Hence man should efficiently perform his duty for the sake of sacrifice alone He, who takes delight in the self alone and is contended in the self has no duty Duty in fact implies detachment and disinterested action

(D) Karma and The Four Orders of Society—According to Geeta, the four orders of society (viz, the Brahman, the Kshatriya, the Vaishya and the Shudra) were created classifying them according to their parental qualities and apportioning them corresponding duties Control of mind, control of senses, purity, forgiveness, straightness of mind and body, belief in God, the scriptures and the other world, knowledge of the sacred love and knowledge of God' these are the Brahman's duty born of his nature On the other hand, powers, majesty, firmness, bravery, ingenuity, not running away from battle, generosity, rulership are the duties of Kshatriya Similarly, cultivation, protection of cown and trade are the Vaishya's duties Service of all the three castes is the Shudra's duty Thus a man devoting himself to his own duty attains the highest perfection His own duty is better through devoid of merit than the duty of other well executed Hence, he who performs the duty enjoined by his own nature, does not incursin

(E) Karma and Knowledge—Further, in Geeta there is a classification of knowledge, Karma and doer which is in accordance to three types of gunas or qualities That knowledge is called Sattvic by which man sees one imperishable entity in all beings And that knowledge which regards the manifold existence of various kinds in all beings as separate is Rajas That knowledge which clings to one individual without reason, without any little value is Tamasic Similarly, action done without the sense of doership, passion and prejudice, without desire of its fruit, is said to be Sattvic Action

which seeks enjoyment prompted by egoism, is called as Rajasic On the other hand, action done without considering the result and involving ignorance is called Tamasic. Similarly, the doer who is unegoistic, unaffected bu success and failure, is said to Sattvic. The doer who is greedy and seek the fruits of action is called Rajasic If the doer lacks self-control and piety, and inclined to rob is called Tamasic But Geeta perfers Karmayoga in which supreme importance has been given on Sattvic doer, Sattvic firmness and Sattvic action.

This the doctrine of Karmayoga, does not preach for the renunciation of actions. It preaches that action must be performed at all events relinquishing attachment and fruit Hence an action which is done as duty giving up attachment and fruit is regarded as Sattvic form of relinquishment He who neither hates action nor is attached to action, is a man of true renunciation Since it is not possible to renounce all actions completely, hence it is said he who renounces fruit of action has truly renounced Therefore, according to Geeta, man should perform his Karma relinquishing attachment. He should neither be attached to success and failure nor the fruit of action should be his object

IMPORTANCE OF THE DOCTRINE OF KARMA

From the social point of view, the doctrine of Karma is most important. This doctrine is most useful in the present society, which is best with good and bad effects of different types. The evolution of its importance can be made on the following basis:

(1) **Inspiration for good actions**—The doctrine of Karma inspire every person to perform good actions An important conception of doctrine is that man receives the results according to his actions. As a result of good actions in consequence of bad actions. Besides the, this doctrine also teaches man not to become inactive.

(2) **Inspiration to attain moral life**—The doctrine of Karma gives great significance to religion What is moral from the social point of view is the religion of the persons concerned. Therefore, the disregard or the violation of religion is strictly prohibited according to this doctrine Thus, while on the one hand, this doctrine preaches man not to become inactive, on the other hand, it also inspires him to attain moral life by presenting before him the fear of 'Karmaphal' or results of actions   •

(3) **Preaching of self control**—The doctrine of Karma preaches man to endeavour to achieve self-control and to remove

illiteracy According to this doctrine the root cause of all bad actions is illiteracy or lack of wisdom Where there is wisdom, there are bound to be good actions Hence, this doctrine encourages man to understand his ownself A man can understand his own-self only when he acquires knowledge For the acquirement of true knowledge, disinterestedness is essential A man can be disinterested only when he has control over his own-self or senses

(4) Inspiration for welfare works—This doctrine emphasises the disinterested aspect Disinterestedness means selfless actions In other words, actions which are performed by man according to religion without hoping its results, are the disinterested actions This conception of the doctrine of Karma inspires to renounce selfish actions and to perform selfless actions According to this doctrine, a person who performs actions disinterestedly and without hoping for its results is a Karma Yogi Works of welfare for others are, in fact, performed by Karma Yogis

CRITICISM OF THE DOCTRINE OF KARMA

Thus, we see that the doctrine of Karma is important for the present social life from every point of view But many western thinkers and scholars have criticised this doctrine on the following ground

(1) The western scholars have regarded it as based on superstitions and as a cause of backwardness of India The name of Mac-Donell is prominent among such scholars According to Mac-Donell, the doctrine Karma tells that man cannot be liberated from the Karmphal or the results of the actions Disinterested actions inspire man to be contended with his present life because the present life of man is the result of his actions done in earlier life Besides this, this doctrine lays more emphasis on the life to come than on the present life Hence, this doctrine minimise the importance of the present life which is detrimental from the point of social progress

(2) The another objection that is raised in regard to the doctrine of Karma is that it supports and justifies caste system *According to this doctrine, this is according the Hindu religion* Consequently, under this doctrine, the efficiency and aptitude of man become limited On one hand higher castes establish their authority in the social organization, on the other hand it inspires inactivity and cowardice among the lower castes This doctrine supports the maintenance of social discrimination and adopts the basis of the feeling of religion for its justification

But the above mentioned objections and criticisms are one sided In fact, the doctrine of Karma preaches performance of good actions and observance of Dharma. Rejecting the fatalistic ideals, this doctrine makes clear the importance of Karma or actions. As we show, so we reap In other words, man receives results according to his actions Thus, the doctrine clearly preaches that the man himself is the builder or maker of his own fate He can bring about the change in his life through his actions.

This doctrine makes it further clear that in all creatures the same soul exists which is immortal and indestructible. Hence, man should lay emphasis on Karma instead of his miseries and happiness This doctrine encourages man to attain purity of soul knowledge of self and pious conduct. According to this doctrine, every man should take himself to good path through knowledge and good actions Instead of being controlled by others, he should have full control over his own self It is only through this medium man can attain salvation. According to Geeta

"उद्धरेदात्मनात्मान मात्मानवसादयेत् ।
आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मेव रिपुरात्मन ।" (गीता अ० ६ श्लो० ५)

In other words, man should do his welfare by himself and should not to harms to his own-self because he himself is his own enemy Thus, the message of the doctrine of Karma is that man should not be inactive He should always be active and should do good actions He should perform only good actions and should not attach importance to its results. For good actions, wisdom is also necessary. Therefore, along with activity, man should always try to keep himself away from illiteracy. A man should always keep these things in view and should ramain busy in his duties If does so he is, in fact the real well- wisher of the society in the country.

Purushartha

Besides Karma and Punarjanama systems the Indian thinkers presented an all around value system in the form of the ideal of *Purusharthas* The purusharthas were again four— *Dharma, Artha, Kama,* and *Moksha* It is interesting to note that Indian value system has been generally built not on duality of trinity but on a fourfold order. In the physical world anything having four legs is definitely more stable than those having three or two legs Thus Indian thinkers wanted to build up a system with stability and longevity. That is why we find four varnas, four ashrams and four purusharthas These four, however, are basically

Cara)   ' One should not be negligent of truth One should not be negligent of welfare One should not be negligent of propriety." According to Chandogya Upanishad Dharma is Yajna or sacrifice. It is soul force It is the spiritual energy in the universe. Besides the Upanishads, Gita also treated Dharma as the cosmic principle. Continuing this tradition the Dharmashastras also insisted upon the universal form of Dharma In the words of P.V. Kane, "The writers on dharmashastras meant by dharma not a creed or religion but a mode of life or a code of conduct, which regulated a man's work and activities as a member of society and as an individual and was intended to bring about the gradual development of a man and to enable him to reach what was deemed to be the goal of human existence " This goal of human existence was liberation Liberation has been defined as realisation of Brahman. The Upanishadic Mahavakyas *"Tattvamasi"*, *"Ayamatma Brahman"*, *"Atman ca Brahman"*, *"Sarvam khaluidam Brahman"*, express the universal nature of Brahman which is the same as Dharma.

One of the noblest prayers in all literature occurs in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, "Lead me from falshood unto truth, from darkness lead me unto light, from death lead me unto immortality" This is the universal form of Dharma Dharma has been further described in terms of universal virtues in it. The Gautama Dharmasutra holds that days (compassion or love for all beings), ksanti (forebearance), anasuya (freedom from envy), sauca (purity of body, speech and thought), mangāla (doing what is commanded), akarpanya (not demeaning oneself before others), asprha (not hankering after sensual pleasures or the possessions of others) are the qualities of the soul: Vasistha says that avoiding backbiting, jealousy, pride, egoism, unbelief, crookedness, self praise, abuse of others, deceit, covetousness, delusion, anger and envy is the dharma of all asramas and further he delivers a fine exhortation 'practise dharma (righteousness) and not adharma; speak the truth and not untruth; look far ahead, not near; look at what is highest, not at what is not highest. The reason for the cultivation of the above mentioned virtues and abstention from the opposite vices is based upon the philosophical principle that there is one universal essence underlying everyone. Thus the ideal of dharma combines morality and metaphysics Like Kant, Daksa declares "one who desires happiness should look upon another just as he looks upon himself." In the words of Devala, "The quintessence of dharma is that one should not do to others what would be disliked by one's self " As a universal principal dharma

stands highest, higher than Artha and Kama The Mahabharata says, "A wise man tries to secure all three, but if all three cannot be attained, he secures dharma and artha or only dharma if he has a choice of only one from among the three A man of middling discipline prefers artha to the other two, dharma is the source of both artha and kama" In the words of Gautam, "One should not allow the morning, midday and evening to remain fruitless so far as dharma, artha and kama are concerned But among these three one should attach most importance to dharma" According to Yajnavalkya also dharma is the highest among Purusarthas

Since the moral qualities for the following of Dharma were common to all, they express the universal nature of Dharma According to Sankhasmrti, "forbearance, truthfulness, selfrestraint and purity are common to all varnas" According to Mahabharat three are the best qualities among all beings viz , absence of enmity, truthfulness and freedom from anger Vasistha says that truthfulness, freedom from anger, generosity, ahimsa (non-injury) and procreation of offspring are the common dharmas of all varnas According to autama, "Even the Sudra has to submit himself to the dharma of truthfulness, freedom from anger and purity of body and mind." Manu says that ahimsa, truthfulness, no wrongful taking of another's possessions, purity and restraint of senses are in brief the common dharmas of all varnas

General Characteristics of Dharma

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From the above discussion concerning the nature of dharma as cosmic principle some general characteristics can be deduced The most important among these are as follows

1. Three active modes—According to Chandogya Upanishad there are three active modes of dharam yajna, adhyayana and dana (sacrifice, study and dedication) Yajna or sacrifice is qualified as tapes The meaning of tapes is soul-force It refers to the spiritual energy which is generated by bringing one's physical nature under the control of his rational will The second mode of dharma is adhyayana or study Related to the study of scriptures is the exposition of the scriptures or pravacana The third mode of dharma is dana Commenting on these three modes of dharam, Prof G Mukhopadhyaya summarises the inter-relatedness and ethical intentionality of the ideas expressed above "By yajna or sacrifice one is linked with the world of the gods, through study or adhyayana one is joined with the supreme sphere of Sabda-Brahman, and lastly through dana, self-giving or gift of things one gets connected with the human world Dharma

thus covers all the spheres of life and is not an isolated state of things."

2. Social Principle—In the words of S Cromwell Crawford, "The key to understanding Brahmanical society is found in the first purusartha, namely, dharma It is a development of the earlier Ṛg Vedic idea of Rta which, as we have seen, represented cosmic law operating in all phenomena—natural, religious and moral. In the smrti period this law permeating the whole universe was called dharma Within the social order dharma was explicitly defined in terms of certain duties and obligations which were codified in the great law books"

3. Criteria of Duty—While Advaita Vedanta has developed dharma as a metaphysical principle, the Mimamsa philosophers develop the concept of dharma as duty. Jaimini starts his sutras with an enquiry regarding the nature of dharma i e., the nature of Vedic duties, relevant proofs, means of the production of dharma and its fruits Whatever is enjoined by Vedic injunctions is dharma or duty, (*yascodanalaksanah sa dharmah*) provided it is not intended to produce any injury to other persons There are certain sacrifices, such as syenayaga, which are performed for injuring one's enemy, though there are injunctions regarding such sacrifices, nevertheless since they produce injury for others, they are not to be regarded as dharma Dharma cannaot be known by any of the other pramanas such as perception, inference or implication, the only way of knowing it is by the Vedic injunction Dharma is thus, according to the Mimamsa, not a quality of the understanding of the self, but is of the nature of the Vedic sacrifices It means only such prescribed sacrifices of the Vedas as have not been associated with any harmful effects Dharmas are either enjoined by the Vedas or directed towards benefical ends. In the words of Surama Das Gupta, "When it is said that Vedic injunctions or prohibitions define the nature of dharma or adharma, the idea is that whether any sacrifical action will produce advantage or disadvantage cannot be known by any other means but the injunction or the prohibition of the Vedas."

4. Practical Principle—Summing up the practical nature of the concept of dharma in Dharmasastras, P V Kane writes, "The foregoing discussionestablishes that all dharmasastra writers attached the highest importance to moral qualities and enjoined them upon all with all the emphasis they could command, but as their main purpose was a practical one, viz , to guide people to right acts in everyday life, they dealt more elaborately with the

acts, rites and ceremonies that each person had to do with reference to his station in society"

5. The Principle of Good—The concept of the Dharma seems to be closely associated with that or punya or the good The Brihadaranayak Upanishad defines Dharma as sreyah (good) There is nothing greater than Dharma In Kathopanishad Dharma has been defined as mystic self knowledge Thus the upanishads define Dharma in the sense of good. Adharma, therefore, means the opposite of good or evil This has been also elaborated in the Nyaya Vaisesika concept of good The Nyaya vaisesika philosophers define Dharma as merit and Andharma as demerit Therfore in order to achieve liberation one must follow Dharma

6. Differentia of Men—According to Indian thinkders it is Dharma which distinguishes between man and animal It is so since it represents the normal law in human society, which is a part of universal divine principle Dharma therefore is the basis of all values It is the substratum of purusarthas It is the regulative principle In the words of K.N Upadhyaya, "The persistence and intensity with which the inquiry into dharma has been pursued in India is mainly on account of the firm conviction of the Indian people that dharma constitutes the differntia of man, whereby he is distinguished from brutes, just as in the West, following Aristotle, rationality is regarded as the distinguishing mark of man This approach at once reveals that what is most vital to man's life is not his mental, but his moral and spiritual nature"

7. The Principle of State Craft—But the most important characteristic of dharma is that it is the principle of state craft In Hindu polity the king was entrusted the responsibility of upholding dharma According to Manu, "Government is an extension of the eternal divine order of society, and the king is responsible for upholding dharma" Thus dharma is the principle of state craft It is the basis of law and order in the state Prof Basham reminds us that in ancient and classical India, government, no matter what its shape, was not an end in itself "The Heghelian concept of the state as an organism of supernatural size and power, transcending all other entities upon earth and mystically linking man with the Absolute, is completely foreign to anything ever thought of in India" The state as protector of dharma comes closer to the Thomistic doctrine of government as the means for promoting salvation

8. Principle of Law and Order—Therefore, the Dharmasastras consider dharma as the principle of law and order

Legislation and the theory of punishment in ancient Indian states was based upon the principle of Dharma. The country observing law and order was known as Dharmarajya. According to Mahabharat, "Kingship was imposed by Divine upon mankind, designed to help people live by the laws of Dharma." Manusmriti regards the king as the repository of all Dharma and responsible for maintaining the order of law. Kamandaka describes the king as the preserver and the maintainer of the duties of Varnas and Asramas who should himself also be entirely obedient to the laws relating to them Thus the rule according to dharma not only included legal justice but also social justice.

9. Integral apporach—The most important characteristic of Dharma from the poinint of view of culture, is the integral stand point The principle of following swadharma is the basis of unity in diversity in Indian society. Integral approach has been characteristic to Indian culture. Indian philosophy has emphasised one ultimate element underlying the multiplicity of the phenomenal world Leaving aside exceptional philosophies as that of Carvaka, from the philosophers of the ancient Vedas down to the contemporary Indian thinkers including Swamy Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, Sri Aurbindo, and others, one fids and integral approach in philosophy. Dharmasastras advocated a multisided integral progress as the ideal. Since ancient times the Indian ideal of four Purusharthas i e , Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha has presented an integral view of life. "The integral view point does not negate the distinctions but shows unity in diversity and neither emphasises unity nor diversity exclusively but harmonises both in a more integral vision."

10. Characteristics of Indian Culture—One of the meanings of the term Dharma is culture Therefore, all the characteristics of Indian culture are the characteristics of Dharma in India The fundamental characteristics of Indian Culture are: religious orientation, spirituality, religious tolerance, synthetic spirit, adaptability, freedom of thought, integral approach and most of all, unity in diversity. All these characteristics are equally the characteristics of Dharma. Dharma is cultural oranisation and spirituality It has been equated with self knowledge According to Sri Aurobindo, "Spirituality is the key to the Indian mind " We can say that spirituality is the key to understand Dharma. Spirituality is spontaneity It is totality It is synthesis. It is intergality. It is dynamism and comprehensiveness It is the natural principle All these characterise Dharma

11. Humanism—Another significant characteristic of Dharma is humanism Humanism is the philosophy in which man occupies the central place Dharma, the universal principle is basically a moral principle which is essentially human We have already refered to the humanist interpretation of Atman, Brahman and their indentity in connection with the conceptions of Upanishads and Bhagwad Gita Humanism propounds unity in diversity in individual, national and international affairs The same has been propounded by Dharma Each country and each human being in a particular time and place has some specific 'Dharma' and the sole aim of his life is to realize it similarly, humanity too has a 'Dharma' and that is the maximum and most comprehensive realisation of human values

12. Dynamic approach—The followers of Dharmasastras have generally followed the letter in place of spirit and have been too much conservative Dharma, on the other hand, has the characteristic of a dynamic principle Defining Dharma as the dynamic human property Prasastapada has maintained, "It brings about to the agent happiness, means of happiness and final deliverance, it is supersensuous, it is produced by the contact of the man with the internal organ, by means of pure thoughts and determinations, and with regard to the different castes and conditions of men there are distinct means of accomplishing it" In the words of S Cromwell Crawford, "Hindus call their religion Sanātana Dharma which literally means "Eternal Law' The name should in the no wise suggest that the ethical ideals connected with this religion are eternal in the sense of being fixed, static, unchanging substances To the contrary, Hindu ethichs, like the river Ganges, has been in a state of ceaseless flow down the ages, constantly changing its course and currents relative to the hard, intervening realities of Indian history All of its fundamental presuppositions—Karman, samsara, dharma—have evolved from streams of thought originating in earliest times These elements have survived to the present day, not inspite of change, but because of change Thus, under the rubric of eternal universal law, Hindu ethics combines continuity with dynamic diversity "

It should be remembered here that the description of the characteristics of Dharma in the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Bhagvadgita, the Dharmasutras, the Dharmasastras, the Six systems and even in the writings of contemporary Indian philosophers is only different in emphasis but same in essentials Therefore, the above description of the characteristics of Dharma

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is equally applicable in case of Dharmasastras as in all other cases The above characteristics however, do not exhaust the list. In fact the list cannot be easily exhausted

2. Artha

The next Purusartha after Dharma is Artha It has been given an important place in Indian Culture. Kautlya has defined Artha in his Arthasastras as, "The livelihood of human beings is the Artha" Thus Artha is the use of Earth for the means of livelihood in human lives Vatsyayan, in his Kamasutra, has defined Artha "as including knowledge, land, animals, friends and earned money etc , following one's own Dharma and increasing it " Thus Artha includes the primary needs of men As has been pointed out by different Dharmasastras, it was essential for the householder to pursue Artha According to Kamasutra, "A person who did not achieve learning in the first stage, did not earn the money in the second nor did ovserve penance in the third, cannot do any thing in the fourth " Thus it was obligatory on the part of every person to work for Artha The stage of the housholder has been given a central place in Hindu Ashram system The main aim of this stage was the achievement of Artha, not only for himself but for so many others in society It was said that even the fulfilment of Dharma and Kama are based on Artha According to Vatsyayana, "every householder must pursue Artha" Arjuna said in Mahabharata, "Whatever is considered Dharma in the world is compeletely based upon wealth .all the religious activities, all the pleasures, even the heaven can be achieved by means of wealth" In Arthasastra, Kautlya has pointed out, "Among Dharma, Artha and Kama, Artha is the highest since it is the means for the achievement of Dharma and Kama" This has been also supported by Panchtantra and Hitopadesha However, the Indian thinkers seldom considered Artha without Dharma as desirable While wealth was many a time considered the highest value, it was insisted that it must be based upon Dharma

Another extreme is the negation of Artha Some Indian thinkers have supported fatalism and did not include Artha among Purusarthas They have insisted that wealth is achieved by fate and does not depend upon efforts This vein of thinking can be observed in the sayings of so many saints in India including Malukadas, Kabirdas, Dadu etc. However, this has not been given much importance by most of the thinkers Hitting hard at the supporters of fate, Vatsyayan, in his *Kamasutra*, pointed out that success is impossible without efforts since Purusartha is the root

cause and subustratum of all activities Even necessary things do not come without it Therefore, one should make sustained efforts to attain Artha Without it is useless to expect pleasure of welfare According to a famous Sanskrit verse Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth smiles on the brave and persevering Similar quotations can be found in abundance in so many Sanskrit works

As Dharma was systematically and elaborately discussed by Dharmasastras, India has a tradition of Arthasastras as systematic and detailed works upon the subject of Artha Kautilya has considered Artha as the main among trivarga According to him, in Trivarga Artha is the most important, sice both Dharma and Kama depend upon it According to Vatsyayana one should constantly make efforts to increase his learning, land, gold, animals, wealth, cloths, ornaments and friends The Arthasastras present a scientific analysis for the achievement of Artha Among Arthasastras, the Arthasastra of Kautilya is the most important It includes a summary of earlier Arthasastras These earlier Arthasastras, however, have not been available The Arthasastra of Kautilya is only the first available but also the most important work concerning Artha

Defining the scope of Artha, Kautilya has pointed out in Arthasastra that Artha means the habitat of human beings or the region in which human beings are established Arthasastra is the science which discusses the establishment of the state and the rules of its preservation Kautilya has discussed the subject in great detail His work is considered as one of the most important works not only upon Indian Economics and Hindu Polity but among the most important works on this subject in the world According to Kautilya the state is the root of Artha Therefore, a society can achieve Artha only under a favourable state Since the state aims at Artha, the king should have a tendency in its favour The king is central in the state and therefore for him Artha should be more important than even Dharma and Kama It is only when the king leads in this matter that others may follow it Thus Kautilya has insisted that the king should present ideal conduct and character in the achievement of Artha and should maintain conditions in which the citizens may achieve Artha Thus Indian thinking in socialistic and humanistic No one can achieve Artha alone or acting against the society Artha should be achieved collectively According to Gita all land belongs to God It has been clearly maintained by Kautilya tha the king who fails to do his duties concerning Artha he may be removed

3. Kama

The third purusartha is Kama Kama has been literally defined as desire Desire is the motivating power of all activities Therefore, it is at the root of all actions This Kama however, may be of three types Satvika Kama is according to Dharma Rajasika Kama is the result of the combination of sense organs an desires This is pleasent while enjoying but its result is poisonous Tamasika Kama is born of sleep, ignorance and laziness It is neither pleasant while enjoying nor its results are pleasant Of the three types of Kama the first has been universally recommended in India It appears to be ordinaly while enjoying but its results are most pleasent in the long run

Laying emphasis upon the value of Kama in Youth, Vatsyayan has said in *Kamasutra* that, "One should enjoy Kama in youth " Dividing the average age of one hundred years from the point of view of achievement of Purusarthas, into three categories, Vatsyayana has maintained that sice birth to sixteen years of age one should achieve Artha And Kama and after that one should devote the remaining life to Dharma and liberation Thus Kama has been considered the chief Purusartha in youth Pointing out the characteristics of Kama, Vatsyayana has said, "Kama is the tendency of the desires of the five sense organs for the achievement of their corresponding objects " It is the pleasure expernced by the self in the fulfilment of the sexual tendencies

Thus Kama includes lust and natural attractions It is the cause of mutual attractions among different living beings It is the basis of creation, it leads to procreation The knowledge of Kama is achieved by imitation of efficient perosns as well as by the study of *Kamasutra* Just as the Arthasastras aim at systematic exposition of the means to Artha, similarly India has a tradition of Kamasastras discussing the means of enjoyment in minute details However, this was done in a moral and religious background Therefore, Yashodhara, in his Sanskrit commentary on *Kamasutra*, maintains "Kamasutra is a normative sastra. It aims at stating the rules by following which a man can achieve Artha, Dharma and Kama " Thus *Kamasutra* unravels *the rules* of enjoyment This enjoyment may be both worldly and other worldly The *Kamasutra* insists upon the achievements of worldly pleasures upon the Earth and spiritual welfare in heavens Therefore, the Indian thinkers have insisted have insisted that Kama must be based upon Dharma Thus, while accepting all the

facts concerning sex and other innate tendencies in human beings, the Indian thinkers have insisted that no enjoyment should be aimed at which is anti-social The other extreme tendancy found in some Indian works, is the down right condemnation of Kama as undesirable India had an ancient tradition of control of sense organs and sometimes even of self repression Brahmacharya has been explained both positively and negatively While explained positively, it is conservation of sex energy for its utilisation and diversion into creative spiritual channels, its negative interpretation is based upon extreme repression of the natural tendencies Both these interpretation can be found in ancient Indian works These works abound in examples of the dangers of pursuing Kama There had been a whole science of systematic repression aiming at complete elimination of the natural tendencies in human beings However, this was not the only trend The tradition of Kamasutras in India has been equally powerful and popular These authors laid strong emphasis upon the worldly enjoyments and fulfilment of natural tendencies According to Vatsyayana, "The enjoyment of Kama is as much necessary for the body as the food " Just as too much food creates diseases and yet noone leaves it entirely for fear of the diseases, similarly though the extremes of Kama may be injurious and yet no wise person should abstain from it One should try to achieve all the three Purusarthas of Dharma, Artha and Kama The *Kamasutra* of Vatsyayana describes in details, not only the daily routine of the householder, the minute details of love making and sex enjoyment but even the techniques of premarital and extramarital sex relationships as well as the activities of the prostitutes etc It evolves a science of enjoyment in the form of sixty four arts required to be mastered for cultural development and worldly enjoyment Thus Kama was the most important persuit of the householder It can be said without exaggeration that the *Kamasutra* of Vatsyayana may be favourably compared with any treatise presented by any Western scholar

It should be remembered here that Indian thinkers have insisted upon a positive attitude towards life Upanishads, the sources of Indian philosophy have maintained that Anand is the source of creation In the words of Taittarrya Upanishad, "All the beings have their origins in Anand, all the things and living beings live by Anand and they are dissolved in Anand, Brihadaranyaka Upanishad has clearly pointed out, "The only seat of Anand are the sex orgns Thus many thinkers have compared Kama with

the tendency of sexual intercourse The Indian thinkers maintain that there is a natural tendency in the cosmos of the multiplication of one into many The Shaiva sect considers the world as the product of mutual attraction of Brahman and Maya Similar examples can be given from other philosophical and religious sects. In sum, it may be said that Kama has been given its due importance in Indian ideology

4. Moksha

The ultimate end of human life, according to Indian ethics is moksha or liberation According to Vivekanand, "Morality is not an end in itself, mukti is its end, it is only a means for the achievement of liberation " From Vedas to Sri Aurobindo, Indian thinkers have always considered moksha as the aim of life. It is however, wrong to consider liberation as the sole ideal of human life As has been already pointed out, Indian thinkers aimed at a fourfold scheme of values in which each was valuable. Moksha was the last but not the only value

Moksha literally means deliverance. Thus it is deliverance from all types of pains, worldly as weel as other-worldly It is a state devoid of all sufferings It is pure bliss It is deliverance from the cycle of rebirth It is the achievement of other-worldly welfare It is the unity of the Atman with Brahman It is the absolute aim It is the highest value It is the realisation of ultimate Reality Indian philosophy maintains a harmony in mataphysics, epistemology and axiology All these aim at the same reality which is atman in man, Brahman in cosmos and Liberation as value While all other aims are relative, moksha is the ultimate end It is the status of identity between Atman and Brahman This mystic realisation has been explained in Mahavakyas of the Upanishads such as Tattvamasi, Aham Brahmasmi etc The microcosm and macrocosm have the one underlying reality. Forgetfulness of this truth is ignorance Ignorance is the cause of bondage Bondage leads to pains and sufferings Liberation from this depends upon the realisation of the original truth of the identity of Atman and Brahman

The concept of liberation has taken several forms in the history of Indian philosophy Of these the most important are as follows

1. Positive interpretations—Positive interpretations of Moksha may be found in the Upanishads, the Bhagvadgita and the Vedanta philosophy and the Jain metaphysics The Advaita Vedanta defines Moksha as Brahmanhood The Vishisht advaita

defines it as Sarupya, Samipya, Salokya and Sayujya etc, including different types of relationship of man and God Bhagvadgita has defined liberation as complete surrender and identity with the Divine Devotion has been insisted upon as the most important means for the achievement of Miksha from the positive view point The other equally important means is knowledge and action

2. Negative interpretation—According to negative interpretation, Moksha is nihilistic and negative The example of nihilism is the Shunyavada of Madhyamika Buddhista philosophers It aims at absolute elimination of all consciousness It is absolute negation of pain According to negativism, as found in Nyaya, Vaishesika and Mimamsa philosophical systems, moksha is the negation of suffering According to Vaishesika philosophy it is the complete elimination of nine characteristics of the self The negative interpretation of liberation is particularly found in Buddhista thought

3. Neutral interpretation—Neutral interpretation may be found in Samkhya and Yoga philosophy According to Samkhya Moksha means complete elimination from the three types of pains and a status of absolute detachment of the self Yoga aimed at the attainment of a consciousness ablolutely detached and free from all impulses The tradition of Yoga started in the Vedas and it has been constantly developed and practiced by Indian philosophers to our own time. It has been the most significant contribution of Indian culture to the world It gives what is known as liberation while living, which has been accepted as possible, not only by the orthodox schools of Indian philosophy but also by hetrodox schools of philosophy the Jainism and Buddhism

Thus the most prevalent view in Indian thinking is that moksha may be achieved while living Nyaya Vaishesika and Samkhya philosophers, however, has not been accepted by the majority of Indian thinkers Besides the distinction between liberation while living and liberation after death, there has been a distinction between individual and collective liberation While the traditional Indian philosophy normly belives in individual liberation, the Neo-Vedanta philosophers including Vivekanand, M.K. Gandhi, R N Tagore, Bhagwandas and Sri Aurobindo insist upon the necessity and possibility of collective liberation Thus it is clear that Moksha cannot be called an individualistic or extra-terrestrial goal Sri Aurbindo, particulary, has interpreted it is in the light of the consciousness of the modern man Even the most recent exponents of Indian Yoga such as Rajneesh, Mahesha

and others have given an interpretation of Moksha which is acceptable even to the Western men and women. The popularity which Yoga is receiving these days in the West shows that in it Indian culture has offered something which is valuable in all times and climes

Our discussion of the four purusarthas viz., Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha in this chapter shows that Indian culture insists upon a harmoneous, multisided, comprehensive, positive, spontaneous, total and spiritual interpretation of human vaules. It can be said without exaggaration that this axiology provides a firm

Varna System

According to Sanskrit Hindi Dictionary by Vamana Shivarama Apte, the term varna means colour, description, explanation, interpretation, praise, extention, observation, perception, form, beauty, caste, race, type, genus etc. According to *Meghdoot* of Kalidas, Varna means complexion, form and beauty According to *Raghuvansha* of Kalidas, Varna means human class, tribe or clan In most of the passages of Rig Veda the word Varna means colour or light However, in some of its verses the word Varna is associated with groups of people having a skin of a dark or fair colour For example, according to Rig Veda, "Indra placed the law, the dark colour in a cave of darkness." Similar passages may be found in so many places in Rig Veda. The Arya Varna (colour of the skin) was white. In contrast, the colour of the skin of the dasas or dasyus was dark. This contrast has been pointed out at so many places in Rig Veda These passages make it clear that both the Aryas and Dasas were designated as Varnas on account of colour of their skin

Similar references may be traced in Brahmana scriptures The Taittariya Brahmana says, "The Brahmana is the divine varna and Sudra is the Asurya Varna " The Sudras were called Asur mainly because of their dark complexion In Rig Veda wods, "Asuryam Varnam means Sudra tribe The Aryans always kept ᴬryas and Dasas quite distinct and belonging to antegonistic campus due to the dinstinctions in their complexion The earliest meaning of the term varna was colour, in the context of Aryas and Dasas According to P V Kane, "Though the words Brhamana and Ksatriya occur frequently in the Rgveda, the word varna is not used in connection with them Even in the Purusa sukta (Rgveda X 90) where the words brahmana, rajanya, vaisya ans sudra occur,

the word varna in Dharmasastras means social classes, it was not the original meaning of the term It may be noted here that the Dharmasastras traced the origin of varna system to purusa sukta However, as has been pointed out above, the word Brahmana in Rgveda does not mean caste P V Kane, including some other scholars, points out that purusa sukta is a much later hymn than most of the hymns of the Rgveda According to him, "In the whole of the Rgveda the words vaisya and sudra do not occur except in the Purusa sukta, though both of them occur in the Atharvaveda " It may be conceded that the four varnas may have come into existence at the time of the composition of purusasukta G S Ghurye thinks that the reference in Rg X 71 9 to a false claim for being regarded as a Brahmana points to the conclusion that Brahmanas had become a caste. This claim however, has been refuted by P V Kane by various examples Similarly, Mr Ghurye's claim about the existence of other varnas in Vedic times has been also refuted by Prof P V Kane. According to the latter's conclusion, "The position of the three varnas *inter se* (called collectively arya) now requires consideration It is clear that the Samhitas other than the Rgveda and Brahmana works show that the three classes of brahmanas, ksatriyas and vaisyas had become differential and their privileges, ditues and liabilities and become more or less fixed in those times "

The Varna system presents a structure of values and funcions which provide both the personal and social justice It is based upon the moral principle of Karma It is believed that everyone is born with peculiar leanings, temperament and abilities due to his past karmas The future birth may be changed by *practising the duties attached to the Varna of the present life* Therefore, each one was asked to follow the social duties and functions characteristic to his varna In personal life varna was based upon the twin ideals of *Swabhava* and *Swadharma* These two are the psychological and social aspects of the same phenomena The social duties of a person are relative to his psychological makeup Each one should follow his own psychological make up, sice by that alone he can make his contribution to the social whole Thus within the person Swabhava is the guiding principle One who acts on Swabhava acts spontaneously Spontaneity is the result of totality Thus following Swabhava results in harmony It gives justice to each part of man And the result is happiness, sice psychologically speaking, happiness is the outcome of total satisfaction which involves satisfaction of each aspect Swadhar na

means one's duties in society. These duties should not be imposed from outside In order to be natural, spontaneous and divine the duties must be based on Swabhava Thus Swadharma and Swabhava should be identical Swabhava should decide Swadharma It may be noted here that according to western psychology of vocational guidance and educational guidance also Swabhava is the basis of choice in education and vocation. Again, from the point of view of national progress also this alone is the golden principle If everyone is allowed to follow education and vocation according to his Swabhava, the total result of national achievement will be obviously maximum Thus varna system provides a solid basis for personal justice

The above interpretation of the close relationship between Swabhava and Swadharma requires and understanding of the inner meaning of the sanctions behind varna system Varna system has a divine sanction at its back It has been generally believed in India that one is born in a particular varna due to Divine will This Divine will, however, does not distinguish between man, Nature and God The trinity is essentially based upon the Unity known as Brahman Therefore, if Varna system is ordained by Divine, it only means the realisation of the natural principle. And since man is a part of Nature it is a human principle. Further, since humanity and the individuality are just two names of the same phenomena, the varna system is the individual principle Therefore, in order to achieve personal justice either within the man or within the society, in order to achieve maximum national progress and the happiness one should follow a vocation according to his innate leanings, temperaments and abilities, which was the essential meaning of varna system applied to the individual This shows the significance of the Varna system in personal justice

Duties of the social varnas

The above explanation of Varna system is the result of the author's own thinking in the field of personal psychology, vocational psychology, ethics and the interrelation of all these This type of explanation is not available in any other work about varna system Varna system has been generally conceived as a social structure Varnas have been generally taken as social Therefore, the Dharmasastras have described in details the duties of the social varnas This description was in keeping with the ancient tradition starting right from the Vedas Thus the propositions with which the Dharmasastras start were borrowed from the Vedas, the Brahmanas, the Upanisads and the Bhagvadgita After an

elaborate discussion of varna system in all these before the advent of Dharmasastras, P.V Kane arrives at the folowing conclusions

(1) that in the earliest times about which we have literary records there were only two varnas, the aryas and their opponents the dasyus or dasas, that the difference between the two was based on difference of colour and culture and was thus more or less racial and cultural,

(2) that centuries before the samhita period closed the dasyus had been conquered and were given a position subservient to the aryas,

(3) that the sudras were the dasyus so subjugated and made subservient,

(4) that the spirit of exclusiveness and pride of superiority existing among the aryus with reference to dasyus soon extended to groups among the aryas themselves,

(5) that by the time of the Brahmana Literature, brahmanas (men supposed to be devted to learning and priesthood), ksatriyas (kings, noblemen and some warriors) and vaisyas (the artisans and common people) had become separated into groups more or less dependent on birth and that the brahmana had come to be regarded as superior to the ksatriya by the fact of birth,

(6) that even such low castes as candalas and paulkasas had been evolved long before the end of the Vedic period

(7) that owing to cultural advance, division of labour arose and numerous arts and crafts had been developed and they were in the process of contributing to the complexity of the system by creating numerous sub-castes based upon occupations,

(8) that besides the four varnas, intermediate castes like the rathakara had been evolved,

(9) that there were certain non-Aryan tribes which were supposed to have been originally ksatriyas but fallen later on

The writers on Dharmasastra start with the proposition that the four varnas viz brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya and sudra, are *arranged in a descending scale of social status with duties peculiar to them The duties and privileges of varnas occupy a prominent* place in Dharmasastras The peculiar duties were the principal means of livelihood of these varnas According to Manu Smrti, the basic social ideal is the division of the society into four castes, Brahmins, Ksatriyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras These divisions are of divine origin The Brahmin was created from the mouth of Brahman; the Ksatriyas from his arms, the Vaisya from his thighs,

and the Sudra from the Lord's feet The ethical implication of the divine origin of varna is that it is an integral part of a divine pattern for the sake of the prosperity of the worlds," and, therefore, it is morally incumbent that one obediently accepts his role in compliance with "sacred law." The study of the Vedas, offering sacrifices and giving gifts are said to be the duties absolutely enjoined on the brahmana, ksatriya nd vaisya, while each of these three varnas has certain peculiar privileges, which are its principal means of livelihood Teaching Vedas, officiating at sacrifices and receiving gifts, these are the privileges of brahmanas; the profession of arms and protection of the people are the peculiar privileges of ksatriyas, agriculture, rearing cattle, trade and money-lending are the peculiar privileges of vaisyas The first three viz., study, sacrifices and giving alms are said to be the dharmas of all dvijas and the other actions such as teaching the Vedas are for the scholar dvijas. According to P V Kane, "The consequence of this bifurcation is that if the first three are not performed or are neglected, the person concerned was deemed to incur sin, while a brahmana is not bound necessarily to earn his livelihood by all or any one of the three viz teaching, officiating at a sacrific or receiving gifts."

Interdependence of varnas

The four fold division of society, according to the varna system was based upon the scientific idea of division of labour. In the words of P V. Kane, "The theory of varnas as conceived by Manu and other smrtikaras was based upon the idea of the division of labour, on the idea of balancing the rival claims of various sections of the community, it laid greatest emphasis upon the duties of the varnas rather than upon their rights and privileges" Therefore, all the varnas were interdependent. The entire social order depended upon a close cooperation between the Brahmin and the Ksatriya. According to Satapatha Brahmana, "a brahmana must certainly be approached by ksatriya who is about or perform some act, for indeed that act of a ksatriya which is sped on by vrahmana succeeds" This cooperation was firstly, in the matters concerning Dharma. The purohita of a ksatriya occupied a very high position, nay, the purohita was indispensable to even the vaisya. The purohitas were brahmana. Therefore, it has been said that, "A brahmana may remain without a king, but a king should not be without a brahmana " Again, "The purohita is half the soul of the ksatriyas" Similarly, "For indeed the gods do not eat the food of the king who has no purohits; therefore a king when about to offer a sacrifice should have a brahmana as his purohita with

the idea that may the gods eat my food" Therefore, it was concluded, that the combination of the brahmana and the rajanya is the most desirable and conducive to the eminence of both

This interdependence of the different varnas was not only limited in the field of religious duties but extended to the field of vocations and professions, education, marriage & state-craft There was a constant upward and downward social mobility between the different varnas, at least in theory Yajnavalkya speaks of two kinds of such mobility. When a lower varna changed into a higher varna, it was known as jatyutkarasa or uplift of the caste On the other hand, if a person belonging to a higher varna gradually descended into a lower varna, it was known as jatyapakarsa or the degeneration of the caste Provisions for both these processes of social mobility in stratification were laid by different Dharmashastras with minor distinctions about the conditions It was particularly based upon two conditions, firstly, upon the following of the vocation of some other varna for five to six generations and secondly, marrying into different varnas for as much period. It may be easily guessed that in practice such mobility happened only in exceptions since the process had to be covered for several generations but it is clear that the Dharmashastras did prescribe change of varnas by means of interactions between the varnas both upwards and downwards

Another important source of interaction was marriage Since love between man and woman knows no rules and transcends all bounds, it was natural that males and females belonging to different varnas met and even married against social conventions Such marriages were known by the names of anuloma and pratiloma marriages Here, it is sufficient to note that there was a close interaction between different varnas in the field of marriage

Similarly, in the field of education there was interdependence in the varnas. Normally, brahmana was the educator and the other varnas depended upon him for education Again, in the matter of gifts (dana) the varnas were interdependent The brahmacharis of *the first three varnas for their physical needs* The best recipient of gifts was of course, brahmana and that too because of his character and responsibility, but there was more emphasis on the *criteria of the qualities of the recipient rather than the varna* The gifts were given generally to the brahmins since they were forbidden to earn much money or gather wealth Thus by the *institution of gifts or dana* the other three varnas kept the brahmana, the teacher and the priest free from the worries of

earning his bread so that he may devote all his time to spiritual pursuits It must be conceded here that if a certain section of society has to develop moral and spiritual values, the other sections must help in this effort since ultimately it is for the collective good. Such was the practice in India due to the prescriptions of Dharmasastras In the words of P V. Kane, "Even in the 20th century rural India has villages with a considerable population of brahmanas where many srotriyas learned in the Veda and pandits (those who study sastras like grammer, logic, mimansa) are still found who are content with what little part of patrimony they have got, who engage in the profession of teaching the Veda and sastras in accordance with ancient rules and who do not go about seeking gifts nor accept invitations for dinner at sraddhas ".

Criticism of the Doctrine of Varna

The Dharmasastras prescribed the varna system on the basis of the cultural heritage of the Vedas and the Upanisads They only tried to continue the traditions already established in Aryan society. They only condified the rules and regulations which were already established by customs and traditions As a part of Aryan culture, the varna system was value based. The central value was harmony or unity in diversity. It is what is known in western societies as division of labour. Division of labour has been the characteristic of the well developed societies. It leads to an ordering of the status and roles in social stratification. It makes them complimentary to each other, so that all the classes may act in cooperation for the betterment of society. This is clear by the interdependence of varnas

Social justice involves fairness, equality, humanity, mutuality, freedom and harmony of various constituents As a general rule, all these characteristics may be seen in our discussion of social justice among various varnas We have already pointed out that if brahmanas were given maximum privileges they were also to shoulder maximum responsibility Conversely, if the sudras were deprived of certain privilege and had to undergo so many disabilities they were also free from almost all the social responsibilities The burden of maintaining the Dharma in society was mainly on the shoulder of the first two varnas viz. the brahmanas and the ksatriyas If, like Plato in *The Republic* these classes were given special privileges, it was quite in keeping with the principle of social justice. It is very important that the brahmana was forbidden from amassing wealth. He had to depend on the next two varnas even for his livelihood, in exchange for the

goods he delivered to the society Therefore, his life was full of sacrifices in spite of so many privileges. And if he shrinks from the sacrifices, the authers of Dharmasastras have only derogatory remarks for him, so much so that people were asked to treat him as sudra Thus social respect was connected with social responsibility and not with money and political power The political power was subordinated to the spiritual power and the power of money occupied only the third place Therfore, the system of reward and punishment aimed at a hierarchy of values in which the spiritual values were foremost, the virtues and skill in arms were next and the economic values occupied the third place

The most controversial issue in the varna system was the status of sudra This, however, was not dependent upon birth but upon abilities and skills As has been already pointed out, any member of the first three varnas who failed to fulfil his social duties, was counted among sudras. Then there is a mention of possibility of the change of varnas through marriage and change of vocation for several gererations The reason for insisting upon a period of several generations was to get the change established so that there may be no disorder. Therefore, those who wanted to rise in the social ladder were allowed to do so And since the sudra was allowed so many freedoms along with his incapacity to fulfil so many responsibilities it can be easily understood that he did not feel exploited by the social status given to him

In fact, most of the criticisms of the varna system are based upon misunderstanding of contemporary situations As has been already pointed out, there were sudra kings in the time of Manu, and they were notorious for their anti national activities Therefore, prescriptions against them by Manu smriti were only natural Yajnavalkya smriti, an equally important Dharmasastra removes all imbalances in varna system prescribed by Manu It restores a suitable social status for women and sudras and treats them as equal in almost all the matters Manu smriti alone does not represent Dharmasastras Yajnavalkya smriti is a better representative from the point of view of social justice This must be remembured while evaluating social justice among varnas as prescribed by Dharmasastras Finally, this social system was based upon centuries of actual experience, which in fact, is the surest criteria of social justice. The authors of Dharmasastra again, insisted upon change of Dharma according to ages. Such change can be seen in the sequence of Dharmasastra literature itself

Ashram Vyavstha

According to Sankrit Hindi Dictionary of V.S. Apte the term Ashram means stages, monastery, duties etc. Writing in *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, the German scholar, Paul Deussen gives two meanings to the word ashram : (1) That place where people labour and make effort, (2) To labour or make effort. The word ashram comes from the Sanskrit root srama giving the meaning of 'making an effort'. In this way ashram literally means a step in the journey of life. In the words of P.V. Kane, "The word asrama is derived from 'sram', to exert, labour and etymologically means a stage in which one exerts oneself."

According to Hindu ethics, the aim of life is liberation. And every ashrama is a step in the long journey to that aim. "The whole of the life of a human individual is for the Hindu," says P.H. Valvalkar,"A kind of schooling and self-dicipline." In the Shanti Parva of Mahabharata, Saint Vedavyas has described ashrama as a four rung ladder which takes one in the direction of Brahman Vedavyas says, *Chatushapadi hi nihsreni brahman yesha Pratishthita, etamaruhya nihshreni brahmaloke mahiyate* " In this way, in each ashrama, the person prepares himself for every succeeding ashrama state. Literally, and Ashrama is a halting or resting place The ashrama system is a means of systematic development for the better life Dr. P.M Modi has tried to prove that in the beginning there were only three ashramas and that Vanprastha and Sanyasa were considered as one ashrama. He has cited instances in his favour from Chandogya Upanishad and Manusmriti It is in Jabala Upanishad that one finds the mention of four ashramas for the first time. This scheme of the stages of life during the period preceding Dharmasastras was rather indefinite. They were made definite for the first time by Dharmasastras The Dharmasastras maintained clearly that each individual should normly pass through the four stages of life known as Ashramas Thus, according to Dharmasastras, the stages of human individual's life are four : Brahmacharya, Grihastha, Vanprastha and Sanyas Of these at least three have been described by Upanishads before Dharmasastras According to P V Kane, "The word asrama does not occur in the Samhitas or Brahmanas But this cannot be stretched to mean that the stages of life denoted by this word in the sutras were unknown throughout the Vedic period "

Significance of Ashrama System

As has been already pointed out, while the varna system primarily concentrates on social justice, the Ashrama system

primarily concentrates on justice within the individual This however, does not mean that it has no relevance to social justice In order to carry out life in different ashramas, individuals have to depend upon society For example, individuals in the first stage of life, devoted to learning and alround development, have to depend for their livelihood upon the second ashrama Thus the householders met all the expenses of the students Again, even the life of a vanprasthi and a sanyasi were not devoid of social reference On the other hand, they were entirely devoted to social service, along with spiritual pursuits It cannot be denied that sometimes the system was so interpreted that people in the last two stages of life devoted all their energies for their individual spiritual development, away from society, generally living in forests However, even in such cases the very presence of such persons in large numbers in society and the knowledge of their presence to at least their kith and kin had its influence in building up a general social atmosphere of fulfilment of duties, sacrific, asceticism and following the spiritual values And since members of these two stages had to depend upon the householder for their livelihood, therefore, they were bound to do something for sciety and lead it to spiritual values Indian thinkers never considered man as a cog in the social machine, subordinate to social control, since they were very much conscious of his predicament and his destiny Therefore, they have again and again, laid maximum emphasis upon individual development through learning, through enjoyment of the world, through renunciation and finally through liberation But again, Indian thinkers never considered man in isolation of society In fact, the question of the relationship of the individual and society never arose in the minds of Indian thinkers since they were never considered as two different phenomena but rather two expression of the same Reality viz Brahman The same Brahman was believed to have expressed in man as individuality and in society as commonality Therefore, there was hardly much distinction between individual and social welfare, individual and social development, individual and social salvation Hence when the Ashram system helped in the individual welfare, development and salvation, it at the same time contributed to social welfare, development and salvation These ideals have been again and again emphasized by Indian thinkers from the seers of the Vedas and the Upanishads to contemporary Indian philosophers including Vivekananda, Rabindra Nath, Sri Aurbindo, M K. Gandhi and others Therefore, it can be said that the ashrama system is as much based upon the ideal of social justice as the varna system

Number of Ashramas

From the times of the most ancient dharmasutras the number of ashramas has been four, though there are slight differences in the nomenclature and in their sequence. According to *Ap. Dh. sutra*, "There are four ashramas, viz. (staying in) the teacher's house, the stage of being a muni, the stage of being a forest dweller" According to *Gaut. Dharmasutra*, there are four ashramas, brahmachari, grahastha, bhiksu' and vaikhanasa. According to *Vas. Dh. Sutra*, there are four ashramas, brahmachari, grhastha, vanaprastha and parivrajaka. According to *Manu smriti,* there are four ashramas, the last being called Yatr and also sanyasa According to Manu smriti the span of human life is 100 years though all do not live to that age. In fact that is the maximum age one can expect to reach. This has been divided into four parts so that one may lead an alround integral life. It is not necessary that each of these stages should be lived for 25 years, they may be more or less However, normally the span of each Ashrama was prescribed as 25 years According to Manu smriti the first part of man's life is brahmacharya in which he learns at his teacher's house and after he has finished his duty, in the second part of his life he marries and becomes householder, discharge his debts to his ancestors by begetting sons and to the gods by performing yajnas. Then, when he sees that his head has grey hair and that there are wrinkles on his body he resorts to the forest i e , becomes a vanaprastha. After spending the third part of his life in the forest for some time he spends the rest of his life as a Sanyasin. Similar rules have been laid down by other Dharmasastras, with of course, minor differences here and there For example, according to Baudhayana Dharmasastra, the stage of sanyasa starts after the 70th year.

The above mentioned scheme of four ashramas was interpreted from three different points of view, as follows :

1. Samuccaya (orderly co-ordination)—According to this view a person can resort to the four ashramas one after another in order and he cannot drop any one or more and pass on to the next, nor can he resort to the householder's life after becoming a sanyasin. This view was primarily supported by Manu This view lays emphasis upon the householder since the other ashramas depend upon it. Most of the Dharmasastras push the last two ashramas in the background so much so that according to some of them these are forbidden in the Kali age.

2. Vikalpa (Option)—According to this view there is an option after brahmacharya i e , a man may become a parivrajaka immediately after he finishes his study or immediately after the house holder's way of life. This view has been supported by Vasistha Dharmasutra, Yajnavalkya smriti and others

3. Baddha (anubandha for contradition)—According to this view there is really one Ashrama and that is that of the householder. The first stage is a mere preparation for this Ashrama while the last two Ashramas are inferior to it. This view was supported by Gautama and Baudhayana According to Gautama, there is only one Ashrama According to Baudhayana the ashramas other than that of householder do not begot offspring and are therefore not much rated This was due to the influence of this viewpoint that almost all the dharmasastras praise the ashrama of householder as the highest This is particularly important from the point of view of provision for social development, progress, stability and justice.

Inspite of the above three views about the following of the Ashrama system, the general views believes that all the four asharmas have their value and details about the activities and duties of all these ashramas have been prescribed by dharmasastras. Some have clearly pointed out that there is no distinction due to superiority among the four ashramas Others maintained that the householders life was the rule and other ashramas were for the blind and other incapable persons

Criticism of the Doctrine of Ashrama

From the avove discussion of the prescriptions of the Dharmasastras about various stages of life, it is clear that the ashram system is indicative of an integral approach to human life By it a complete development of human power, physical, mental and spiritual, takes place and their proper stisfaction leads to an integral development of man. It maintains the balance of social and individual development It is the most unique system in human social history and has eternal value. The ashram system was prescribed for the achievement of the values included in the concept of purusarthas The idea of Purushathas is a fundamental principle of Indian social ethics According to it, the aim of evey person in the world is to attain the four purushathas—Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha Kama or sex is a natural tendency in every person Artha or wealth is the means of fulfilment of sex and other needs and the life system of society. Dharma implies the laws or principles on which society is based. According to the Vaisesika philosophy, Dharma is that which leads to improvement

in this world and to liberation in the next Dharma, Artha and Kama relate to objects of this world. These are, in brief, called the Trivarga Duty, wealth or sex indicate respectively ethical ideals, physical means and physical, mental and vital desires of man It is man's duty to fulfil all the three" Beside trivargas, liberation is just as important in human life At the time the Hindus interpreted trivarga as a means to liberation though generally all the four Purusharthas have been stressed Vatsyayana has writeen, "A man in hundred years of age should gain knowledge in childhood, sex satisfaction in youth and attend to duty and liberation in the old age " Manu states clearly, "Some people attribute more importance to duty, some to wealth and some to sex. Actually, all the three are equally important and creditable." Manu had gone to the extent of saying that one should try for liberation only after he has passed through the three Ashramas to fulfil duty, attain wealth, and enjoy sex, and has rid himself of the three debts to God, ancestors and teachers because a person not doing so will find himself in trouble In this way, it is clear that with regard to the aim of life, Indian social ethics emphasizes an integral approach

Relationship with the Concept of Rin

The system of Ashramas was also closely connected to the conceptof rinas Four types of debts have been enumerated in the Shatpath Brahmana : (1) to gods, (2) to seers, (3) to ancestors, and (4) to fellow beings Ordinarily, Indian thinkers have accepted three types of debts : (1) Paternal debt, (2) Debt towards teachers, and (3) Debt towards gods Debt to parents is the highest because they look after a person in his infancy, suffering much pain themselves in the process According to the Indian commentators, the way of repaying parental debts is to have children oneself and look after them in the same way. Besides the parents, the seers and teachers impart knowledge to a person and make him capable of doing all work efficiently in the world As for the repayment of this debt the means are to study the Vedas and to obey the laws of the Brahmacharya Ashram The debt to gods is paid off by performing defferent yajnas. A person owns these debts the moment he is born and he cannot hope for liberation unless he clears the debt. In Brahmcharya Ashram the individual clears his debt to his ancestors, seers, gods and fellow beings The same is true about the Grahastha Ashram as well. After repayment of the debts in these two ashramas a person may enter Vanaprstha Ashram, followed by Sanyas. However, in these two Ashramas as well the person remained concerned with his fellow beings though he was no more under any obligation

Sanskars (Sacraments)

Before discussing the different sanskars (sacraments) it is necessary to understand the meaning of the word 'sacraments' The word sacrament has many meanings such as to complete, quality of self-creation, religious activity, to purify etc But in the context of Hindu society, sacrament means that activity which helps to achieve purity and as a result of which the complete development of the personality of the individual is made. In fact, the development of the individual is necessary in accordance with society In order to fulfil his need, the sacrament has been adopted as a means in Hindu society and is connected with physical and non-physical aspects of man This helps the socialization of the individual and develops in him respect for labour, virtue and duty. The sacraments are generally prevallent in almost all the societies of the world For example, Sunnat and baptism are prevalent among the Muslims and the Christian respectively But sacraments have a special significance in Hindu society They have always been related to the age, occasion and Ashrama etc of the individual

Great significance has been given to sacraments in Hindu society. Since sacraments are regarded as a part of the religion, because of this special feature of the sacraments, their sociological significance is constantly increasing

According to the Hindu view, a sacrament is that activity the performance of which makes a matter or person fit for use In other words, scraments are those activities the performance of which develops ability in the person. According to *Vir Mitrodaya*, sacraments is that ability which arises by the performance of the activities prescribed and sanctioned by the Shashtras In other words, scraments means those religious activities and those mental and intellectual refinements through which the individual may develop his complete personality Besides this, sacraments also include religious and other activities It is the activity which is performed from birth to death It presents opportunities before the individual for his physical, mental and spiritual development

AIM OF SACRAMENTS

Like Hindu society, the historical background of Hindu sacraments is also very old Therefore, it is very difficult to crystallize as to what are the definite aims of Hindu sacraments According to *Manu Smriti*, some sacraments remove hereditary defects Yajnavalkya also subscribes to this view Keeping its

practical utility in view, some aims can be discussed. Hindu sacraments are regarded as part and parcels of the dharma. It is the aim of the dharma to develop the individual and the society from every point of view. In short we can make the classification of the aims of the sacraments as follows :

(1) **To develop the personality**—The main aim of the Hindu sacraments is to ensure the complete development of the personality of the individual. In Hindu religion, there is no provision for natural development of the personality. It develops the individual in accordance with some specific ideals but the personality of the individual is very wide. It has many aspects physical, mental, social and educational etc. Therefore, the 16 sacraments of the Hindus are connected with some or the other aspect of personality and help their development.

(2) **To develop material property**—The second important aim of the Hindu sacrament is to make the individual materically prosperous and capable. It has been the firm conviction of the Hindus that divine blessings can be obtained through the performance of different sacraments and the cherished ambition can be achieved Hence, the achievement of the cherished ambition and wishes are inherent in the performance of the sacraments

(3) **Spiritual development**—Besides the material progress the aim of Hindu dharma is to have the way for spiritual progress Sacraments, the individual can be inspired to achieve the spiritual goals The person performing the sacraments is not only engrossed in the worldly life but also establishes a harmony between physical things and spiritual things

NUMBER OF SACRAMENTS

There has been a great controversy in regard to the form and number of Hindu sacraments According to Griha Sutras, the number of sacraments are 40 such as Garbhadhan Punsavan, seeman Tonnyan, Jat Karma, Nam Karan, Anna Prasan, Upa Nayan, Marriage etc According to *Vaikhanasa*, there are 18 sacraments of the body. According to *Manu*, Garbhadhan, Jat Karma, Nam Karan, Anna Prasan, Chudakarama, thread ceremony, Keshapt, Marriage and Antveshti are the main sacraments In 'Smriti Chandrika, there is a mention of 16 sacraments The more important among such sacraments are as follows

(1) Garbhadhana Sanskara

The first Sanskara of human life is *Garbhadhana* After marriage, the married couple promise before the sacred fire to lead

a love showered lofe and offer prayers to *Lord Vishnu, Sinivali,
Ashwinan Agni,* and *Indra* to bless them with most innocent but
powerful children so that they might be able to follow the *Dharma*
The couple also makers sacrifices to the fire Thus the Garbhadhana
Sanskara is done with this pure and sacred feeling Thus is all
done for the child that is going to come in the womb of woman

(2) Punsavana Sanskara—This Sanskara takes place when
the wife's pregnancy reaches its third month Following *mantra* is
told to the woman :

"आ वीरो जयंता पुत्रस्ते दशमास्य"

This Sanskara is performed with the object to get a powerful
son as well as the safety and health of the embryo

(3) Seemantonnyan—This sacrament is performed in the
fourth month of pregnancy This sacrament starts with the
establishment of fire There is a controversy in regard to the
performance of this sacrament

(4) Jatakarma Sanskara—The aim of this Sanskara is the
creation of proper atmosphere suited to the versatile development
of the child from the very time of his birth and also to reckon
parents of their responsibility towards the character building of
the child

The Sanskara is performed when the child is born The father
touches the child and whispers some *mantras* into his ears wishing
him to be intelligent and long life After it, with a pen of gold, OM
is inscribed on the child's tongue

(5) Namakarna Sanskara—When the child becomes of ten
or twelve days, the Namakarna Sanskara is performed The child
is given his name On this, *Manu* feels, that the Namakarna should
be according to the varna and ideals

(6) Nishkraman—In this sacrament, the child is taken out
of the house for the first time and is made to have a 'Darshan' of
the Sun. There is vivid and detailed description on this sacrament
in Girh Sutras and Smritis The Sacrament is performed by the
parents after 4 months of the birth of the child

(7) Anna Prasana—When the child becomes 6 months' old,
and becomes fit to take food, tha i this sacrament is performed
Clean and good food is prepared along with the recitation of Vedic
Mantras and thereafter father of the child or any adult member
of the family gives food to the child

(8) Chooda Karan—In this sacrament, the hair of the child are saved for the first time. According to Vedic texts, the performance of this sacrament increases happiness, good fortune and enthusiasm. This sacrament can be performed in between the end of the first and the third year of the birth of the child.

(9) Karna Bhedha—In this sacrament, the ears of the child are pierced through for the first time. Girh Sutras do not mention this sacrament. This sacrament is performed for enabling the child to wear ornaments. There is a controversy among the scholars with regard to the time and performance of this sacrament.

(10) Vidyarambha (Start of education)—This sacrament was necessary to start the education of the child. In this sacraments the child has first to take bath and then taken to the Guru for learning the letters

(11) Upanayan (initiation)—This sacrament is a sacrament to determine the social status of the individual Without the performance of this sacrament, no individual can marry a Vedic girl After the performance of this sacrament, a person can be called a Dwija According to Hindu Dharma Shashtras, man is a Shudra by birth He is therefore entitled to be called a Dwija only after the performance of the sacrament of initiation. The scholars have prescribed different ages for the sacrement of initiation for persons of different castes The Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas are called Dwijas because they undergo the sacrament of initiation. Thus from the point of view of upanayana ceremony, all Hindus are divided into two broad categories namely Sudras and Dwijas

The aim of Upanayana Sanskara is to establish a close relationship between the child and teacher to the maximum possible extent The child is awarded a sacred thread to wear around his neck and is taught the laws of Brahmcharya

(12) Samavaratana Sanskara—The person after finishing his studies and observing all the rules of Brahmcharya, returns to the family fold and undergoes the rituals of the Samavartana Sanskara. At this stage he is shared for the first time in his life and is allowed to lead the normal domestic life

(13) Vivaha Sanskara—Vivaha Sanskara heralds man's entrance in the Grahstha Ashrama. This is the vital stage of socialisation for a man and he avows to engage in reproduction as his contribution to the furtherance of his race

A chain of rituals are practicised during the performance of Vivaha Sanskara and, thereby the importance of wed-lock is highlighted.

Grahastha Ashrama life continues till he attains his fifteenth year and after that upto 75 years of age he undergoes Vanaprastha Ashrama and the last days of his life are spent in the Sanyasa Ashrama till he dies

(14) Antyeshti Sanskara—When a person dies, he undergoes the last Sanskara i e., Anthyeshti Sanskara is performed. Traditionally, the dead body is burnt on the wooden pyre Mantras are chanted and ghee besides holy water, is sprinkled on the pyre The eldest son of the deceased performs last rites

IMPORTANCE OF HINDU SANSKARAS

The sanskaras of Hindus are of great significance The life of the individual has been connected or co-related with the vast scheme of the sanskaras These sanskaras help to refine and develop the life of the individual They pave the way for his spiritual and material progress In fact, the sanskaras included all the material and spiritual ambitions of a person However, it may be noted that in the modern time, only the form of the sanskaras has survived Many defects and evils have crept in these sacraments They have assumed th form of conventionalism Two major importance can marrale in following points —

(1) Sanskaras strike a balance between individual and society Ethically these Sanskaras are highly valuable During the whole life of man, he is vested with some new responsibilities and duties and Sanskara inculcate the feeling in him to do his duty and discharg the responsibilities assigned to him in order to enlarge the welfare of others Sanskaras are not only for his own good, but they also represent man's responsibility to society This is how Sanskaras act to create a balance between the individuals and society and by following them, the man as well as society both stride towards progress and prosperity

(2) Sanskaras help the individual to lead an integral life growing with society.

3

STRATIFICATION

BASES, FORMS AND EMERGING PATTERNS

Men have long dreamed of an egalitarian society, a society in which all members are equal In such a society men will no longer be ranked in terms of prestige No one will experience the satisfaction of occupying a high social status, no one will suffer the indignity of being relegated to a position which commands little respect. No longer will high status evoke deference and admiration or envy and resentment from those in less worthy positions Wealth will be distributed equally amongst the population. The rich and poor, haves and have-nots will be a thing of the past. Workds such as privilege and poverty will either change their meaning or disappear from the vocabulary In an egalitarian society the phrase 'power to the people' will become a reality No longer will some have power over others Positions of authority and the obedience they command will disappear. Exploitation and oppression will be concepts of history which have no place in the description of contemporary social reality. Men will be equal both in the sight of God and in the eyes of their fellow men.

Clearly the egalitarian society remains a dream All human societies from the simplest to the most complex have some form of social inequality. In particular, power and prestige are unequally distributed between individuals and social groups In amny societies there are also marked differences in the distribution of wealth Power refers to the degree to which individuals or groups can impose their will on others, with or without the consent of those others Prestige relates to the amount of esteem or honour associated with social positions, qualities of individuals and styles of life Wealth refers to material possessions defined as valuable in particular societies It may include land, livestock, buildings, money and many other froms of property owned by individuals or social groups This chapter is concerned with the study of the unequal distribution of power, prestige and wealth in society

Inequality and Stratification

It is important at the outset to make a distincion between social in equality and social stratification The term social inequality simply refers to the existence of socially created inequalities Social stratification is a particular form of social inequlity It refers to the presence of social groups which are ranked one abovbe the other, usually in terms of the amount of power, prestige and wealth their members possess. Those who belong to a particular group or stratum will have some awareness of common interests and a common identity They will share a similar life

style which to some degree will distinguish them from members of other social strata The Indian caste system provides an example of a social stratification system.

Hindu society in traditional India was divided into five main strata four varnas or castes, and a fifth group, the outcaste, whose members were known as untouchables Each caste is subdivided into jatis or subcastes, which in total number many thousands Jatis are occupational groups- there are carpenter jatis, goldsmith jatis, potter jatis, and so on Castes are ranked in terms of ritual purity The Brahmins or priests, members of the highest caste, personify purity, sanctity and holiness. They are the source of learning, wisdom and truth Only they can perform the most important religious ceremonies. At the other extreme, untouchables are defined as unclean, base and impure, a status which affects all their social relationships They must perform unclean and degrading tasks such as the disposal of dead animals. They must be segregated from members of the caste system and live on the outskirts of village or in their own communities in the middle of paddy fields Their presence pollutes to the extent that even if the shadow of an untouchable falls across the food of a Brahmin it will render it unclean. In general, the hierarchy of prestige based on notions of ritual purity is mirrored by the hierarchy of power. The Brahmins were custodians of the law, and the legal system which they administered was based largely on their pronouncements. Inequalities of wealth were usually linked to those of prestige and powr. In a largely rural economy, the Brahmins tended to be the largest landowners and the control of land was monopolized by membners of the two highest castes

As exemplified by caste, social stratification involves ahierarchy of social groups Members of a particular stratum have a common identity, like interests and a similar life style They enjoy or suffer the unequal distribution of rewards in society as membners of different social groups. Social stratification, however, is only one form of social inequality. It is possible for social inequality to exist without social strata. For example, some sociologists have argued that it is no longer correct to regard Western industrial society, particularly the USA, *as being stratified* in terms of a class system They suggest that social classes have been replaced by a continuous hierarchy of unequal positions. Where there were once classes, whose members had a consciousness of kind, a common way of life and shared interests, there is now an unbroken continuum of occupational statuses which command

varying degrees of prestige and economic reward Thus it is suggested that a hierarchy of social groups has been replaced by a hierarchy of individuals Although many sociologists use the terms social inequality and social stratification interchangeably, the importance of seeing social stratification as a specific form of social inequality will bnecome apparent as the chapter develops

Social Versus Natural Inequalities

Many stratification systems are accompanied by beliefs which state that social inequalities are biologically based Such beliefs are often found in systems of racial stratification where, for example, whites claim biological superiority over Blacks and see this as the basis for their dominance The question of the relationship between biologically based and socially created inequality has proved extremely difficult to answer The French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau provided one of the earliest examinations of this question He refers to biologically based inequality as 'natural or physical, because it is established by nature, and consists in a diffference of age, health, nbodily strength, and the qualities of the mind or the soul' By comparison, socially created inequality 'consists of the different privileges which some men enjoy to the prejudice of other, such as that of being more rich, more honoured, more powerful, or even in a position to exact onbedience' Rousseau believed that biologically based inequalities between men were small and relatively unimportant whereas socially created inequalities provide the major basis for systems of social stratification. Most sociologists would support this view

However, it could still be argued that biological inequalities, no matter how small, provide the foundation upon which structures of social inequality are built. This position is difficult to defend in the case of certain forms of stratification. In the caste system, an individual's status is fixed by birth A person belongs to his parents jati and automatically follows the occupation of the jati into which he was born Thus no matter what the biologically based aptitudes and capacities of an untouchable there is no way he can become a Brahmin Unless it is assumed that superior genes are permanently located in the Brahmin caste, and there is no evidence that this is the case, then there is probably no relationship between *genetically based and socially created inequality in traditional* Hindu society. A similar argument can be advanced in connection with the feudal or estate system of medieval Europe Stratification in the feudal system was based on landholding The more land an

individual controled, the greater his wealth, power and prestige The position of the dominant stratum, the feudal nobility, was based on large grants of land from the kind. Their status was hereditary, land and titles being passed on from father to son It is difficult to sustain the argument that feudal lords ultimately owed their position to biological superiority when a son, no matter what his biological make-up, inherited the status of his father.

The most stubborn defence of the biological argument has been provided for systems of racial stratification. In the USA, Black Americans, who make up 12% of the population, have traditionally formed a distinct social stratum at the base of the stratification system The majority of Blacks occupied the most menial and subnservient occupational statuses, being employed as agricultural labourers and as unskilled and semi-skilled manual workers in industry This system of racial stratification has often been explained in terms of the supposed genetically based inferiority of Blacks In particular, it has been argued that Blacks are innately inferior to Whites in terms of intelligence. 'Scientific' support for this view has been provided by intelligence tests which indicate that on average Blacks score fifteen points below Whites. However, most sociologists would argue that systems of racial stratification have a social rather than a biological bais.

So far the question of what exactly constitutes biological
inequality has no been answered It can be arged that biological differences become biological inequalities when men define them as such Thus Andre Beteille states that, 'Natural inequality is based on differences in quality, and qualities are not just there, so to say, in nature, they are as human beings have defined them, in different societies in different historical epochs'. Biological factors assume importance in many stratification systems because of the meanings assigned to them by different cultures. For example, old age has very different meanings in different societies In traditional aborigine societies in Australia it brought high prestige and power since the elders directed the affairs of the tribe. But in Western societies the elderly are usually pensioned off and old age assumes a very different meaning Even with a change of name to senior citizen, the status of old age pensioner commands little power or prestige So-called racial characteristics are evaluated on the bases of similar principles. that is values which are relative to time and place. The physical characteristics of Blacks in America were traditionally defined as undesorab;e amd assปcoated with a range of negative qualities However. with the

rise of Black Power during the late 1960s, this evaluation was slowly changed with slogans such as 'Black is beautiful' It can therefore be arged that biological differences become biological inequalities only to the extent that they are defined as such They form a component of some social stratification systems simply because members of those systems select certain chracteristics and evaluate them in a particular way Andre Beteille argues that the search for a biological basis for social stratification is bound to end in failure since the 'identification as well as the gradation of qualities is a cultural and not a nature process'

Social Stratification and Social Differentiation

Men as social beings require fulfilment of so many needs This presupposes presupposes performance of different types of action These roles decide the social status of a person in society It is well known that in a society different individuals perform different roles, whatever may be the cause of this differentiation Thus they enjoy different status and role in society. This is particularly due to individual differences based upon sex, age, intelligence, learning etc While in primitive society this cocial differentiation is relatively simple, it is much more complex in modern societies where one finds istinction bnased upon occupations, classes, races, economic status, political views and religion etc The process of categorising different groups of society on the basis of individual or groups distinctions in known as social differentiation In the workds of **F.F. Lumley**, "By differentiation, we mean that process by which individuals cultivate differences, which when put together as the different players in an orchestra make a fuller and more harmoneous whold " As **Martin Neumeyer** puts it, "Social differentiation is the process whereby social differences of persons and groups occur, due to biological heredity and physical characteristics—age, sex, race, consanguineous and individual, variations in vocations, social status, cultural background, and acquured personality traits and accomplishments and differences in group composition and social relationship Social differences are both phases and products of process of differentiation " Thus the following similarities may be observed in the process of social stratification and social differentiation

1. Both are the processes of categorising social groups
2. Both are necessary for alround development of society

3 Both the processes help in division of labour in society

4 Both have so many socio-cultural similarities

5 Inspite of the above mentioned similarities, social stratification and social differentiation differ as follows :

1. Distinction concerning status—Social differentiation categorises social units on the bases of biological, cultural and social distinctions In other words, social differentiation draws attention towards biological, social and cultural differences. This however, does not refer to the distinction of the status. The process of social stratification, on the other hand, is based precisely upon the distinction of status It categorises social units according to their economic, social, political or religious status.

2. Distinction of stability—Social stratification cannot be achieved without some sort of stability among social units since it requires the acknowledgment of higher and lower in the social order On the other hand, social differentiation does not require stability amont social groups.

3. Distinction of higher and lower—Social differentiation is based only upon distinctions without any reference to the higher and lower status according to these distinctions. The process of social stratification, however, is based upon higher and lower status in the social order, according to which special previleges and faculties are given to those enjoying higher status in the social order

Meaning and Definition of Stratification

Many socilogists have defined the concept of social stratification in many ways

According to *Kingsley Davis*, "Some stratification is the name applied to the resultings system of organization "

Cuber & Kenkel has defined the concept of stratification and Social Stratification in the United States According to them "Social stratification has been defined as a pattern of superimposed categories of differential privilege."

This brief definition has several important elements .

(1) First, social stratification is a cultural pattern, accepted by the members of a society, that assigns them to a general position in the social structure

(2) Second, social stratification is superimposed by the traditions of the society without the will or even the conscious knowledge of the great majority of the members

(3) Third, social strafification involves a system of differential privilege, which menas that certain groups receive 'more of the goods, services, power and emotional gratifications of the society that others

According to *Melvin M Tumin*, "Social straification is a system of institutionalized social inequality that may have very little connection with abstract justice and the equality of all men On an ethical level, many forms of social stratification are unjustified, however, much they may contributes to the orderly functioning of the society" There is even some question of the ultimate social efficiency of many forms of social stratification The individual may lose interest and conscientiousness in his work if his awards are not commensurate with his efforts because of inferior status

Ogburn and Nimkoff have written in 'Handbook of Sociology that "The process by shich individuals and groups are ranked in a more! or less enduring hierarchy of status is known as stratification."

Accouring to *Raymond W. Murray*, "Social stratification is a horizontal division of society into 'higher' and lower' social units " Every society is divided into more or less distinct groups Even the most primitive societies had some form of social stratification

According to *Gisbert*, "Social stratification is the division of society into permanent groups or categories linked with each other by the relationship of superiority and subordination "

George Lundberg writes, "A stratified society is one marked by inequality, by differences among people that are evaluated by them as being lower and higher"

According to *Sutherland and Woodward*, "Stratification is simply a process of interaction or differentiation whereby some people come to rank higher than others "

Therfore, social stratification is the general term for all such systems Under this general heading, a variety of forms of stratification have arisen in different societies Social stratification may, therefore, be · "Hereditary, as in the feudal system, or largely nonhereditary, as in modern America, multiplex, as in a highly differentiated industrial community, or a simple dichotomy between owners and labourers ; based on wealth, as to some extent in

America, or on occupational complexity and responsibility as in
Soviet Russia; connected with racial origin, as in India and America,
or free of conscious racial caste, as in Britain; highly conscious, as
in the aristocracy or relatively explicit as in urban democratic
communities"

Bases of Social Stratification

The bases of social stratification may be categorised as
biological and socio-cultural. These are as follows :

(A) Biological bases—The biological bases, as the category
indicate, depend upon biological distinctions such as those of sex,
age, race and birth. These are as follows :

1. Sex—The distinction between male and female is
primarily biological. However, it takes a cultural form in every
society since everywhere male and female are given higher or lower
status in social stratification. For example, in a patriarchal society
as in India, the male is the head of the family and weilds almost
exclusive power in social, political, economic, religious and other
matters. The women occupy a lower status in such a society. On
the other hand, in matriarchal social systems, the female enjoys
all the rights in social, political, economic and religious matters.
In these societies the descent follows from the female ancestor. The
women occupy a higher status in matriarchal social system. The
marriages in these systems are matrilocal while in patriarchal
system these are patrilocal. The descent is matrilineal while in
patriarchal system it is patrilineal.

2. Age—In most of the primitive and ancient societies the
aged enjoy a higher status than the younger persons. This is
particularly due to better and wider experience and knowledge.
Thus the age distinctions among the child, the adolescent, the
youth, the middle aged and the old males and females, are the
basis of different status accorded to these persons in social
stratification. In most of the civilised societies, political power lies
in the hands of the council of elders. This is known as gerontocracy
or the rule of the elders. However, in some societies the youth
capture political power and the old men retire. In ancient Indian
social system while the elders enjoyed power till the age of 50,
they relinquished it in favour of the youth by accepting
Vanaprastha Ashram and retiring at the ealy age of 50. This kept
all power, social, political, economic and even religious in the hands
of comparatively younger sections of society, while the elders guided

without weilding any power This checked the conflict among generations on the one hand and provided adequate use of experience on the other.

3. **Race**—Though race is not a suitable basis for social stratification, one finds distinctions based upon race not only in developing societies but even more in developed societies This is particularly due to the wide range of distinctions in the physical characteristics of different races. Since the white race usually captured more power in social, political, economic and religious affairs, the white men considered themselves superior to the black people and social stratification was based upon race This bases of social stratification is irrational, meaningless and deplorable Therefore, it is nowhere consciously adopted except in South Africa.

4. **Birth**—India is a glaring example of the social stratification based upon birth This is known as caste system In caste system the class is absolutely hereditary In India while Varnas were four in the beginning and these too were based upon distinctions of characteristics rather than birth, in caste system the Indian society has been divided into thousands of castes and sub-castes with higher and lower social status This has given rise to the disabilities suffered by the lower caste and the consequent reaction and revolt leading to so much social disorganisation Therefore like race, birth too is not considered as a suitalbe base for social stratification In fact, no biological factor may be a suitable basis for social stratification

(B) Socio-Cultural Bases—Distinctions based upon social status and cultural characteristics determine social stratification These socio cultural bases are as follows

1. **Economic status**—According to Karl Marx, since ancient times society has been divided in two classes one having power over property, capital and means of production and the other subservient to this class As Marx puts it "The history of all hitherto existing societies is the history of class struggles Free men and slaves, patrician and plebian, lord and serf, guildmaster and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large or in the common ruin of the contending classes" Thus society has been always divided into haves and have nots, bourgeoisie and the proltiariat Webln calls the hiher class 'leisure class' and Pareto calls it 'the elites'. The higher class enjoys more social, economic, political and

other rights due to its better economic status This is the form of social stratification found in all the social systems of almost all the nations at present

2. **Political power**—Besides the economic status, one finds a social stratification based upon distinctions of political power. Examples of this basis of social statification may be seen amont monarchies, plutocracies, aristocracies, dictatorships and even democracies In democracies where equility of political power is the slogan, one finds a distinction in the social status of the president, the prime minister, the ministers, legislators and so on wielding different political power. Such a social stratification may be seen in communist societies on the one hand as well as under democratic social systems on the other.

3. **Religious Power**—In Christian social organisation the different ranks of papal clergymen occupy different status in society while the Pope himself occupies the highest social status Similar religious bases of social stratification may be observed in some other societies. However, religion is no more an acknowledged and sanctioned socio-cultural basis of social stratification

Forms or Types of Social Stratification

Social strification has been analysed from different points of view. Max Waber distinguishes between class, status, and party. These will be discussed later. Bottomore has distinguished four types of stratification·

1. Slavery

2. Estates

3. Caste

4 Social class and status.

We would like to discuss these in detail

1. Slavery

L T. Hobhouse defines a slave as a man whom law and custom regard as property of some other person. In some situations he is wholly without rights In other situations he may be protected from cruelties and attraction of his master. Hiistorically slavery has existed in various societies in different periods of time. Slavery existed in ancient Greece and Rome South American states had slavery till the nunteenth century.

This system gives the master absolute right over his slave According to Bottomore the basis of slavery is always economic The social status, power, and privileges depend on slave labour With the advent of social change and the ideology of equality and justice, slavery has gradually disappeared

2. Estate

In medieval Europe the main basis of socio-economic structure and stratification was the estate system Estatehood developed as part of feudalism According to Bottomore estates had the following characteristics:

1. Estates were legally defined Each estate had a status based on its privileges and obligations.
2. The estates represented a broad division of labour and performed definite functions The nobility were ordained to defend all, the clergy prayed for all, and the commoner produced food for all
3. The feudal estates were political groups Growing industrialization has weakened the estate system in Europe.

3. Caste

Caste is a hereditary group determined by birth, with rules and regulations concerning food, definite occupations, status and touchability. These characteristics of the caste system do not take into account all the numerous variations presently taking place in the caste system Actually is difficult to formulate a definite and permanent definition of caste. The most that can be done is to describe the features of the caste system in a particular context, since the caste system is undergoing considerable modification and transformation. It would not be surprising if castes were eventually reduced to a word signifying merely a group, since inter-caste marriages are increasing and the restrictions on mutual behaviour, exchange of goodwill and conduct are breaking Some people are changing their caste on the strength of their monetary wealth, the occupations for the various castes are no longer fixed, a member of any caste takes to any profession that he desires, the Brahmins have been deprived of much of their-past glory and respect, very few caste panchayats are to be seen and even they have no control whatsoever over the members Many people have even started excluding their caste name from the name they use. In this way caste is continually taking on the shape of class and-casteism is growing in the form of classism. On the one hand some conditions are favouring its existence while on the other they are unfavourable

4. Class

The word class lends itself to a variety of uses, in the form of the landlord class and business class at one end and the Brahmin class and the capitalist class at the other. But in a sociological study it is improper to use the word class in such an in exact and confused manner. From the scientific viewpoint it is essential to give a precise definition of class Every society has many classes, the individual interests of all of which do not coincide. In the absence of any synthesis and balance struggle may result between them and this struggle may sometimes lead to dangerous revolutions Each social class has its status in society in accordance with which it receives prestige in the society. In this way the members of all classes have some special benefits and facilities which are bestowed upon them due to class status. Class consciousness is generated in the different classes by differences in social status.

Class is a status group The consideration of the class as a status group renders it possibleto apply it to any society which has many strata Wherever a staatus group has a particular position in a heirarchy of ascent and descent, the status groups can be called social classes This not only separates the members of social groups manifestly, but the sense of social status separates them even mentally Social class is a group of people who possess a particular social status or position by virtue of which they possess some privileges, responsibilities and powers In each class there is class consciousness and specific culture

While caste stratification is closed, class-stratification is open In class stratification, movement up and down the social ladder, is possible by personal efforts Therefore, it provides a society more conductive to social progress While Karl Marx maintained that classes are based upon economic differences only, Centre considers occupation to be the basis for class stratification Weblen looks upon manual labour as the basis of class consciousness Cattell believes class consciousness to be the sum total of five factors prestige rating, mean IQ, average income, education of some years and the amount of birth restrictions But class consciousness is not based on these five factors only It continually changes according to circumstances

5. Race stratification

In Western society race has also been a form for class distinctions In radical stratification the white race occupies the highest, the black race the lowest and the yellow race middle status of the rank of the social order Example of racial stratification may

be seen in American society though it is no where overtly sanctioned by any class of thinkers Therefore the two important forms of social stratification are caste stratification and class stratification

1. Caste &
2. Class

Hence, we would like to discuss these two in detail

Caste

Caste is a unique institution of India It is this uniqueness of caste system, which has drawn the attention of the sociologists and anthropologists of the world India alone is the country which observes caste system There is no group in India which has not been affected by caste system Even the Muslims and Christians too have been affected by this unique system Caste system was not so rigid in the beginning, but in course of time it became more and more rigid Now a days it has been changing according to the circumstances It is not only a complex system, but it is also system of its own type Today in India we have more than 3000 castes and sub-castes According to Hutton, we would need an army of experts to study caste system in India Historians, indologists, sociologists, missionaries and anthropologists have written all about the caste system

Meaning & Definitions of Caste

Various scholars have defined caste in different ways

According to '*Hutton*' caste is a natural product of society in the creation of which religion has played no small part Thus according to this scholar religion has been responsible for the origin of caste in India

Some of them are as follows .

According to *Majumdar and Madan*, "Caste is a closed group"

According to Blunt "Caste is an indigenous group or a collection of endogamous groups"

Accordding to *Ketkar*, "Caste is a social group which has two characteristics—(i) Membership is confined only to those who are born within that group, and the persons so born only are included in it, (ii) They are restricted to marry outside that group through rigid rules"

According to *Irawatti Karve*, "Caste endogamy has been given too much importance in defining caste". According to her, "Caste is an extended kin group".

According to *Rislay*, "Caste is a collection of families or a group of families, bearing a common name, claiming a common discent from a mythical ancestor, human or divine professing to follow the same hereditary calling, and regarded by those who are competent to give an opinion as forming a single homogenous community"

According to *Robert Bierstedt*, "A caste is anendogamous group, or collection of endogamous groups, bearing a common name, membership of which is hereditary, imposing on its members certain restrictions in the matter of social intercourse, either following a common traditional occupation or claiming a common origin, and generally regarded as forming a single homogenous community'

According to *L Dumont and D Pocock*, "A society is subject to this system, if it is, divided into a large number of mutually opposed groups which are hereditarily specialized and hierarchically arranged—if, in principle, it tolerates neither paravenu nor miscegenation, nor a change or profession "

According to *R.N. Mukerjee*, "Based primarily on birth, caste is a dynamic system of social, hierarchy and segmental division which enforces on its members more or less rigid restrictions in regard to eating and drinking, marriage, occupation and social intercourses

According to *G S Ghurye*, "This means that in this caste bound society the amount of community feeling must have been restricted, and that the citizens owed moral allegiance to their caste first, rather than to the community as a whole By segmental divisions I wish to cannote this aspect of the system "

According to *N K Dutta*, "Members of a caste cannot marry outside it,; there are similar but less rigid restrictions on eating and drinking witha member of another caste There are fixed occupations for many castes There is some hierarchical gradation of castes, the best recognised position being that of the Brahmins at the top, birth determines a man's caste for life unless he be expelled for violation of its rules, otherwise, transition from one caste to another is not possible, the whole system turns on the prestige of a Brahmin"

When class structure is completely closed at one or more
points we have a caste structure A completely open class system
and a completely closed caste system, of course, are limiting cases,
polar opposites as it were, and it is doubtful if these extremes are
represented by any society. In all actual societies there are some
barriers to vertical social mobility, no matter how teneous they
may be, and in all actual societies too there is some vertical
mobility, eventhough it may not be encouraged

Thus, caste system when it is viewed comparatively and
structurally, it is a system of social stratification It is usually a
rigid and birth-controlled It does not permit individual mobility,
but it is a pure example of ranking aggregates of people Caste is
a system of social-cultural pluralism in terms of distinctive patterns
of social interaction A caste system occurs where a society is made
up of birth-ascribed groups The groups are ordered hierarchically
and they are defined culturally The social hierarchy is based on
differential evaluation, rewards and associations Groups or caste
comprising the total caste system interact as independent parts of
a larger society Each caste has to depend on the other castes
Thus there is always the principle of interdepednence in caste
system Each group is specialized in one hereditary ocupation Each
caste becomes a homogenous group

Characteristics of Caste

To give a complete idea of what a caste is, the following
salient features may be described

(i) Segmental divisions of society The society is divided
into various castes with a well developed life of their own, the
membership of which is determined by the consideration of birth
The status of a person does not depend on his wealth but on the
traditional importance of the caste in which he had the fortune of
being born. Caste is hereditary No amount of wealth and no
amount of penance or prayer can change his caste status Status
is determined not by vocation but by birth *Maciver* says, whereas
in eastern civilization the chief determinant of a class and status
was birth, in the western civilization of today wealth is a
class-determinant of equalor put up greater importance, and wealth
is a less rigid determinant than birth . There are regular caste
councils to regulate and control the conduct of all caste members
This council rules over the whole caste and is the most powerful
organization which keeps the members in their proper places

government body of a caste called Panchayat while literally means a body of five members, but in fact there are many more who meet whenever discions are taken It takes cognizance of the offences against the caste taboos which prevent members of the caste from eating and drinking or smoking with members of other castes, against sex regulations which prohibit marriage outside the caste. It decides civil and criminal matters The Panchayat was so powerful that during the British regime it retried cases which were once decided by the state in its judicial capacity. Its chief punishments were (i) the fines, (ii) feat to be given to the castemen, (iii) corporal punishment, (iv) religious expiation like taking bath in holy waters, and (v) out-casting In short, "caste is its own ruler' It is a small and complete social world in itself, a quasi-sovereign body, all inclusive and marked off from one another and yet subsisting within the larger and wider society. The citizens owe their moral allegiance to the caste first, rather than to the community as a whole

Though in recent times with the introduction and extension of the courts of law and the substitution of village Panchayats for caste Panchayats, the authority of the latter has been some what weakened yet the modern caaste does control its members and influence their behaviour

(ii) Social and religious hierarchy : The second important features of caste system is that it has got aa definite scheme of social precedence Each caste has a customary name that helps to set is apart The whole society is divided into distinct classes with a concept of high and low Thus Brahmins in India stand at the apex of the social ladder According to Manu, the Brahmin is the lord of this whole creation, because he is produced from the purest part of the Supreme Being, namely, the mouth By his mere birth as a Brahmin, a person is the living embodiment of the internal law Feeding the Brahmins is one of the acknowledged ways of enjoying religious merit A Brahmin is entitled to whatever exists in the world. The whole world is his property and others live on his charity. Vishnu is more audacious than Manu He observes; the gods are invisible deities, the Braahmins are visible deities The Brahmins sustain the world It is by the favour of Braahmins that the gods reside in the heavens, a speech uttered by Brahmins never fails to come true What the Brahmins pronounce when highly pleased the gods will ratify, when the visible gods are pleased the invisible gods are surely pleased as well

In contrast to the high position enjoyed by Brahmins the Sudras were subjected to manyfold disabilities They could not use public roads nor avail themselves of public wells, they were forbidden to enter Hindu temples, to attend public schools Servitude is proclaimed to be a permanent condition of Sudras A member of the first three classes must not travel in the company of Sudras They were considered to impart some sort of defilement to objects like bed and seat by their touch Severe punishments were prescribed for a Sudra in case he committed certain types of offence. Thus according to Kautilya, a Sudra, if he violates a Brahmin female shall be burnt to death If he intentionally reviles or criminally assaults a Brahmin the offending limbs shall be cut

(iii) Restrictions on feeding and social intercourse : Another element of caste is the complex of taboos by which the superior castes try to preserve their ceremonial purity Each caste develops its own sub culture Thus there are restrictions on feeding and social intereoure and minute rules are laid down with regard to the kindoffood that can be acceptable by a person and from what casts For example, a Brahmin will accept 'pakka' food i e food prepared in ghee from any community, but he can accept 'kachha' food at the hands of no other caste

The theory of pollution being communicated by some castes to members of the higher ones, oaees severe restrictions of the extent of social intercourse Thus there are restrictions with regard to distances Among the people of Kerala, a Nayar may approach to a Nambudiri Brahmin but must not touch him, while a Tiyan must keep himself at the distance of thirty-six steps from the Brahmin, and a Pulayan may not approach him within ninety-six paces. A Pulayan must not come near any of the Hindu castes Even the wells are polluted if a low caste man draws water from them So rigid are the rules about defilement the Brahmins will not perform eventheir ablutions within the precincts of a Sudra's habitation "Even a modern Brahmin doctor when feeling the pulse of a Sudra first wraps upthe patient's wrist with a small piece of silk so that he may not be defiled by touching his skin "

(iv) Endogamy : A person born in a caste remains in it for life and dies in it Every caste is sub divided into sub castes, every one of which forbids its members to marry persons outside it Thus each sub-caste is endogamous This principle of endogamy is so strict that one sociologist regards endogamy as "the essence of the caste system" There are few exceptions to this general rule of endogamy which are due to the practice of hypergamy Excepting

the cases of hypergamy each caste has to contract materimonial alliances within its own limits Any man violating this law is put out of his own sub caste

(v) Lack of unrestricted choice of occupation : Members of a particular caste are expected to follow the caste occupation They cannot change to other occupation. The abandonment of hereditary occupation is not though to be right No caste would allow its members to take to any occupation which was either degrading like today tapping or impure like scavinging It was not only the moral restraint of one's caste fellows that acted as a restraint on the choice of one's occupation, but also the restriction put by other castes whose members did not allow members of the castes other than their own to follow their occupation Thus no one not born a Brahmin was allowed to function as a priest But the records show that Brahmins did all sorts of odd jobs During the Maratha mupheaval and after they entered the profession of arms During the reign of Akbar they were seen engaged in trade, cultivation, or any advantageous pursuit in general At present though Brahmins are engaged in pursuits of various kinds, still the priestly profession is lazrigely carried on by them Similarly, the Kshatriyas and Vaishyas are now engaged in pursuits other than their original occupations, yet they still in varying degrees maintain the tradition of their original calling "Every profession, with few exceptions, is oepn to every description of person " Baines observes, "The occupation, again, which is common to the latter (the caste), is a traditional one, and is not by any means necessarily that by which all, or even most, of the group make their living in the present day"

(vi) Civil and religious disabilities : Generally, the impure castes are made to live on the outstkirts of the city In southern India certain parts of the town or village are inaccessible to certain castes It is recorded that under the Marathas and the Peshwas, the Maharas and Mangs were not allowed within the gates of Poona between 3 p m and 9 a m. because before nine and after three their bodies cast too long a shadow, which falling on a member of the higher castes defiles him. All over India the impure castes were not permitted to draw water from wells used by the members of other caastes The public schools did not admit impure castese like Chamars and Mahars The Sudras could not study the sacred literature. During the career of Swami Madhavrao, the Peshwa's government had decreed that Mahras, baing 'ati suddras', beyond Sudra, could not have their marriage rited conducted by

the regular Brahmin priests The untouchables could not enter the temples A Brahmin could not be punished with capital punishment If he was imprisoned, he was given a more liberal treatment than the other classes

The Origin of the Caste System

The exact origin of caste system cannot be traced The system is said to have originated in India The records of the Indo-Aryan culture contain the first mention and a continuous history of the factors thaat make up caste The people, who are known as Indo-Aryans belong linguistically to thelarger familyof peoples designated either as Indo-Europeans or as Indo-Germans They comprised the Anglo-Saxons The Celts, the Romans, the Spanish, the Portuguese, and the Iranian among others One of the branches of these peoples which reached India about 2,500 B C is called Indo-AAryans

(i) Racial Theory : According to Dr *Mazumdar*, the caste system took its birth after the arrival of Aryans in India In order to maintain their separate existence the Indo-Aryans used for certain groups and orders of people the favourite word 'varna', 'colour'. Thus, they spoke of the 'Dasa Verna', or more properly the Dasa people. Rigvedic literature stresses very significantly the differences between the Arya and Dasa, not only in their colour but also in their speech, religious practices and physical features. The three classes, Brahman, Kshatriya and Vaishya are frequently mentioned in the Rig Veda The name of the fourth class, the 'Sudra', occurs only once in the Rig Veda The first two classes, i e. Brahman and Kshaatriya represented broadly the two professions of the poet-priest and the warrior-chief. Vis comprised all the common people The Sudra class represented domestic servants approximating very nearly to the position of slaves On the relations subsisting between the four classes the Rig Veda has little to say However, the Brahman is definitely said to be superior to the Kshatriya

(ii) Political Theory : According to this theory, caste system is a clever device invented by the Brahmins in order to place themselves on the highest ladder of social hierarchy Dr *Ghurye* states, "Caste is a Brahmanic child of Indo-Aryan culture cradled in the land of the Ganges and then transferred to other parts of India." The *Brahmanic* literature of the Post-Vedic period mentions certain mixed classes (Sankara jati) and also a group of outcaste

classes (Antya-vasayın) Among the four varnas, the old distinction of Arya and Suddra now appears as Dvija and Sudra. The first three classes are called Dvijas (twice born) The word 'jati' is hence forward employed to mean the numerous sub-divisions of a 'varna'. However this, demarcation is not rigidly maaintained. The word 'jati' is sometimes used for 'varna' In the Brahman period the position of the Brahmans increased manifold The three lower classes are ordered to live acording to the teaching of the Brahman, who shall declare their duties, while the king also is exhorted to regulate his conduct accordingly The pre-eminence of the Brahman had secured him maany social privileges sanctioned by the lawgivers The statement that God created the Sudra to be the slave of all is repeated and he is given the name of 'padaja' (born form the feet).

As the priestly influence grew in India, complicated rules of ritual and conduct were built up and incorporated into the religious books The Brahmans closed their ranks and tried to maintain their superiority over the other classes. It is true that in the beginning there were no rigid restrictions but slowly and gradually the idea of separation stiffened It was first the ritual and ceremonial purity which as time went on took an exaggerated aspects Distinction began to be made between things pure and impure Restrictions were imposed on food and drink When the Brahmans closed their ranks, it was but natural that other classes also should follow suit.

(iii) Occupational Theory : According to this theory, the origin of caste system can be found in the nature and quality of social work performed by the various troups of people Those professions which were regarded as better and respectable made the persons who performed them superior to those who were engaged in dirty professions According to *Nesfield*, "Function and function alone is responsible for the origin of caste structure in India" With functional differentiation there came in occupational differentiation and numerous sub castes such as Lohar, Sonar. Chamar, Bhangi, Barhai Patwaa Teli, Nai, Tamboli, Kahar, Gadaria, Mali etc came into existence.

(iv) Traditional Theory : According to this theory, the caste systems of divince origin. There are some references in the Vedic literature wherein it is said that castes were created by Brahma-the supreme creator, so that human beings may harmoniously perform the various social functions essential for the maintenance of society. According to *Dr Mazumdar*. "If, however, we take the divine origin

of the varna as an allegorical explanation of the functional division of society, the theory assumes practical significance "

(v) Guild Theory : According to *Benzil Ibbetson*, castes are the modified forms of guilds In his opinion, caste system is the product of interaction of three forces, (i) tribes, (ii) guilds, and (iii) religion The tribes adopted certain fixed professions and assumed the form of guilds In ancient India the priests enjoyed greater prestige They were a hereditary and endogamous group The other guilds also adopted the same practices and in course of time become castes

(vi) Religious Theory : *Hocart and Senart* are the two main advocates of religious theory According to Hocart, social stratification originated on account of religious principles and customs In ancient India ireligion had a prominent place The king was considerred the image of God The priest kings accepted different positions to different functional groups Senart has tried to explain the origin of caste system on the basis of prohibitions regarding sacramental food He holds that on account of different family duties there grew up certain prohibitions regarding sacramental food The followers of one particular deity considered themselves the descendants of the same ancestor and offered a particular kind of food as offering to their deity Those who believed in the same deity considered themselves as different from those who believed in some other deity

(vii) Evolutionary Theory : According to this theory, the caste system did not come into origin all of a sudden or at a particular date It is the result of a long process of social evolution A number of factors played their part in the development of the present caste system Among these factors we may enumerate the following ones

(i) Hereditary occupations,

(ii) The desire of the Brahmans to keep themselves pure,

(iii) The lack of rigid unitary control of the state,

(iv) The unwillingness of rulers to enforce a uniform standard of law and custom and their readiness to recognize the varying customs of different groups as valid,

(v) Beliefs in re-incarnation and the doctrine of Karma,

(vi) Ideas of exclusive family, ancestor worship, and the sacramental meal,

(vii) Clash of antagonistic cultures particularly of the patriarchal and the matriarchal systems,

(vııı) Clash of races, colour prejudices and conquest;

(ıx) Deliberate economic and administrative policies followed by the various conquerors particularly by the British;

(x) Geographical isolation of the Indian peninsula;

(xı) Static nature of Hindu society;

(xıı) Foreign invasions;

(xııı) Rural social strucutre

All the above factors conspired to encourage the formation of small groups based on petty distinctions from time to time. The lack of rigid unitary control of the state, the unwillingness of the rulers to enforce a uniform standard of law and custom, heir readiness to recognize the varying customs of different groups as valid, and their usual practiceof allowing things somehow to adjust themselves led to the growth of groups and promoted the spirit of solidarity and community feeling in every group "Multiplicity of the groups and the thoroughness of the system are also due to the habit of the Hindu mind to create categories and to carry things to their logical end a charactereistic manifest in our literature, philosophy and religions creeds".

It may, however, be noted that caste system is not specifically an institution of the Hindus but is a typical Indian institution

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Merits and Demerits of Caste System in India

Merits of Caste System :

From time to time the Indian caste system has been attacked from various quarters and it have been ascribed all the numerous evils from which society is suffering. But the very fact that it continues inspite of these attacks as before, goes to prove that the system is not so bad as it is thought to be The very fact that the Brahmins retained their supremacy for two thousand years proves that they were eminently fitted to be in a position of domination Themerits of the caste system are the following :

(i) Trade Union and Orphanage : It has provided every individual witha fixed social environment. In the words of *Hutton*, "He is provided in this way witha permanent body of associations which control almost all his behaviour and contacts. His caste canalizes his choice in marriage, acts as his trade union, his friendly or benefit society, his state-club and his orphanage It takes place for him of health insurance and if need be, provides for his funeral."

(ii) **Spirit of Co-operation :** It has fostered the spirit of co-operation and fellow-feeling among members of the same caste By helping the poor and needy, it has avoided the necessity of the state supporting the poor It minimises envy or unhappiness

(iii) **Defines Economic Pursuits :** It defines the economic pursuits of the individual There is an occupation pertaining to every caste so that the child's future is not only carved out already but also a proper place of apprenticeship is provided Since there is identification of work with caste, and little thought of change, there is more pride in workmanship Ancient India was a land provided with generations of craftsmen and social cultivators who were extremely skilful in their avocations

(iv) **Racial Purity :** It has preserved the racial purity of the higher caste by forbidding indiscriminate inter-marriages and has greatly fostered the habits of cleanliness by insisting on ritual purity

(v) **Influences Intellectual Make-up :** It influences the intellectual make- up of an individual Since the caste dictates to each member customs to be observed in the manner of diet. The observance of ceremonies and whether he may marry a widow, his views on the social and political matters are bound to be influenced by his caste customs This fosters the spirit of equality within the groups.

(vi) *Integration of the Country :* It develops class consciousness without breeding class struggle. It has created an efficient organization of Hindu society without giving any change to class frictions and factions. It was a best device to organize within one society people of different cultural levels. It prevented the country from splitting up into warring racial units. It integrated Indian society into one vast and variegated community and provided the country with a sure basis of security and continuity whereby a stable and orderly organization of society could be possible.

(vii) **Provides for Various Functions :** It provides for the various functious necessary to social life - "Functions ranging from education to scavenging, from government to domestic service of the most menial kinds and it makes this provision under the sanction of a religious dogma, the belief in Karma, which renders the superficially inequitable distribution of function acceptable as being part of the divine order of the universe" It provides a much better method of division of labour than the Euorpean class system.

(viii) Cultural Diffusion : It helps in cultural diffusion within the group The caste customs, beliefs skill, behaviour, the trade secrets are passed on from generation to generation Culture is thus carried from one age to another

(ix) Separation of Social from Political Life : It has separated the social from political life and has maintained its independence from political influences. S.C. Hill says, "His intimate life, the life which to the Hindu really matters, is altogether independent of the political conditions, which happen to prevail". It serves as a great church and maintains its own religious system by providing for the worship of caste gods

Demerits of Caste System : But the system has given rise to several evils

(i) Denies Mobility of Labour : It has denied mobility of labour since the individual must follow the caste occupation and cannot change it according to his likes or dislikes. This leads to stagnation

(ii) Untouchability : It leads to untouchability. According to Mahatma Gandhi it is "the hatefullest expression of caste." Large sections of people are reduced to the state of virtual slavery In addition, it has also created many other social evils like child marriage, dowry system, purda system and casteism

(iii) Solidarity Retarted : It has retarded the growth of solidarity and brotherhood in the Hindu society by rigidly separating one class from another and denying any type of social intercourse between them It has led to the disintegration of Hindu society and weakened it

(iv) Wrong man in occupation : It often results in putting man on wrong occupation There is no guarantee that a priest's son would also like to be a priest or would possess the qualities for a successfulpriest Under the caste system he cannot take up any other profession even though he may possess the skill and liking for that It does not utilise fully the talents and capabilities of the population and is therefore a barrier to optimum productivity

(v) Obstacle to national unity : It has proved an obstacle to the growth of national unity in the country. The lower classes feel discontented at the behaviour meted out to them in society. As Dr G S Ghurye states, "It is the spirit of caste patriotism which engenders opposition to other castes and creates an unhealthy atmosphere for the growth of national consciousness" E Schmidt

also pointed out that one of the most tragic consequences of the caste system is that it prevents the development of general national consciousness

(vi) Obstacle to social progress : It is a great obstacle to the social and economic progress of the nation Since the people believe in the theory of 'Karma', *they become conservative* And because their economic position is fixed, they are led to inertia killing their initiative and enterprise

(vii) Undemocratic : Lastly, *the caste system is* undemocratic because it denies equal rights to all irrespective of their caste, creed or colour Social barriers are erected specially in the way of lower class individuals who are not given freedom for the mental and physical development and are not provided with opportunities for that

On the perusal of comparative merits and demerits of caste system it may be safely concluded that the demerits far outweigh the merits Although caste system played an important role at a certain stage of Indian History by supplying the social foundation to the village community system, it has lost its utility in modern India A caste system makes for a lethargic and stable society Where status is determined at birth and cannot be either lost or improved by the actions of the individual, there is little encouragement to exceptional endeavour Few will do more than is demanded of them and some will even do less, whether he worked or played, the aristocrat remained an aristocrat No matter how hard a Hariyan worked he could not escape serfdom It is on account of the closed character of Indian caste system that the people of India are slowly motivated and the society as a whole is inert and apathetic As **James Bryce** says "Social structure is an important factor where men are divided by language, or by religion, or caste *distinction* grounded on race or on occupation, *there are* grounds for mutual distrust and animosity which make it hard for them to act together or for each section to recognize equal rights in the other". Until the caste barriers are fractured and it becomes possible for a man of low status to profit by individual effort, such effort will not be forthcoming and the society will ultimately suffer

Changes in the Caste System in India

While discussing the features of the caste system we had the occasion to remark that the caste system is a rigid system

But it is not possible to maintain an absolute caste system. In India the system was never factors in India that worked against the system In fact, a system which lays emphasis on the ideal of absolute social inequality is inherently contradictory. It is not only internally inconsistent but also incompatible with social needs. To be practicable, the ideal would require a static social order. But society is never static. The external conditions in which the society lives and to which it must adjust if it is to survive, are constantly changing. Social change requires social adaptation. The social system must adjust to the changing conditions, and such adjustment inevitably leads to a certain amount of social mobility and the consequent contravening of the principle of absolute fixity of status.

In ancient India, absolute rigidity was never maintained Here and there flexibility was visible, e g Visvamitra, the chaplain of Sudasa, and the famous rival of Vasistha, according to tradition, was a Kshatriya. In modern times this rigid element of caste system has undergone further changes and looking at events one can definitely say that rigid distinctions are watering down. The various factors that have brought about these changes in caste system may be now described

(i) **Reformist movements** : The first important factor nibbling at the root of the caste system was the spread of western education The British brought with them to India a casteless culture and a literature full of thoughts on individual liberty. The Indian who studied this literature could not but be impressed with the progressive ideas of English writers As a result some Indians like Raja **Ram** Mohan Roy and Devendranath Tagore started movements aiming at the brotherhood of man The idea of Brahma Samaj was to establish a brotherhood wherein man shall not be divided from man on account of caste Swami Dayanand preached for the substitution of four-fold division of the Hindu societey in place of the present manifold ramifications and started an association, 'Arya Samaj' for reviving the ancient purity of the Vedic society The chief centre of Arya Samaj was in Punjab In Poona, Jyotirao Phooley, though a mali by caste and of comparatively little education started the association called the Satyashodhak Samaj in 1873 for asserting the worth of man irrespective of caste He demanded representation for al classes of the Hindus in all the local bodies, the services and institutions and also established a primary school for the so-called untouchables in Poona Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of the nation, made the

problem of the removal of untouchability a national one His name will always be remembered in the history of its abolition

(ii) **Legislation during British rule :** Apart from the attacks of Indian reformers, the Britishers, when they occupied the country, tried to impose the western type of culture and in doing so they came into direct conflict with the established caste system in this country By the establishment of British courts and administering a uniform criminal law, they removed from the hands of the caste panchayats many matters that used to ʰ erstwhile adjudicated by them After it the British administrators tackled civil matters In 1856 the Widow Remarriage Act was passed which contained clauses practically violating the customs of the lower castes In 1876 the High Court of Bombay ruled that 'courts of law do not recognize the authority of a caste to declare a marriage void or to give permission to a woman to remarry" Later on it was ruled by the various High Courts that the people could engage any priest they liked and were not at all bound to call for the services of the hereditary priest, thus abolishing the only bond of holding together the various caste, ı e , the employment of common priesthood The Caste Disabilities Removal Act of 1850 gave another blow to the caste integrity The Act facilitates conversion to another religion or admission into another caste without affecting the property of the person Then the Special Marriage Act was passed in 1872 which made it possible for an Indian of whatever caste or creed to enter into a valid marriage with a person belonging to any caste or creed, provided the parties registered the contract of marriage, declaring inter alia that they did not belong to any religion This clause of declaration was repealed by the Amending Act of 1923 which applies only to Hindus including Jains Sikhs and Brahmos The British administrators took a further step for removing some of the civil disabilities of the untouchables They recognised the rights of untouchables to be properly educated and to be given all social, economic and political benefits In 1925 in Madras all public wells and schools were thrown open to all the classes including the depressed Government scholarships and concessions in fees were awarded to the students of the depressed classes Under the Montague—Chelmsford scheme special representation was extended to depressed classes

Half-hearted measures—Thus the British Government from time to time passed various laws which to a certain extent removed the dissabilities of the lower classes But these acts and other steps taken by the British administrators in India did not go very far

towards the solution of the problem of caste Most of the activities
of the British Government were dictated by prudence of
administration and not by a desire to reduce the rigidity of caste.
The British rulers never seemed to have given much thought ot
the problem of caste, nor had they shown any willingness to take
a bold step rendering caste innocuous Their measures were
piecemeal and half hearted which were taken with due regard to
the safety of British domination

(iii) **Impact of industrial revolution :** Industrial
revolution has also been a factor responsible for transforming the
Hindu social structure Cate system in India is to a very large
extent related to village industries and handicrafts They decay of
village handicrafts and hereditary occupations, which is the
inevitable result of industrilization, affects the social structure in
a number of ways The old occupations having disappeared new
occupations have appeared wherein the Brahman and the Sudra
freely meet and mix There is much more freedom of choice of
occupation today than under the old regime At present many
members of the Brahman caste are seen engaged in almost any of
the occupations excepting, of course, sweeper and scavenger
Many members of the various artisan castes are shopkeepers, bank
clerks and teachers Whatever restrictions caste imposed on the
choice of occupation have now ceased to exist and guide the
individuals Industrialization leads to urbanisation of population
The village people, who are much caste ridden, flock to the city.
In the city people are forced to put aside their orthodox ideas and
have to eat articles of gfood prepared by non-caste fellows With
the spread of communications personal contracts have multiplied
which have changed the attitude which seperated caste from caste.
The locate of caste panchayats has been taken over by tgrade
unions, law courts and other such bodies The trade union includes
all the workers, to whatever caste they belong, as members, caste
restrictions cannot be enforced in a factory where members from
the lower class brush their shoulders with the members of the
higher class

(iv) **Attack by Indian Constitution :** The most systsematic
and severe attack on the caste system has been recently made by
the Constitution of India its very preamble solemnly asserts that
the people of India have constituted themselves into a Sovereign
Democratic Republic, which is named "India, that is, Bharat". The
aim is to secure to all its citizens justice, social, economic and
political liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship,

equality of status and opportunity, and to promote among them all fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual Equality thus guaranteed, is not only of opportunity but also of status The citizens of India have avowed that the purpose of their politicalassociation is to guarantee every citizen not only equality of opportunity, not only absence of unequal treatment in social and economic matters but also to bring about a state of affairs in which differences of status will not exist Equality of status for individuals can exist only in a classless society and not yet even in a casteless one

In guaranteeing the right of equality Sec 15 of the Indian Constitution reads :

(1) The state shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, or a caste, sex, place of birth or any of them

(2) Nocitizen shall, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them, be subject to any disability, liability, restriction or condition with regard to

- (a) access to shops, public restaurants, hote..s and place of public entertainment, or
- (b) the use of wells, tanks bathing ghats, roads and places of public resort maintained wholly or partly out of state funds or dedicated to the use of the general public

Article 16 guarantees equality of opportunity to all citizen inmatters relating to employment or appointment to any office under the state irrespective of religion, race caste, sex, descent, place of birth, residence or any of them Article 17 has abolished untouchability and its practice in any form is thereby forbidden The right of freedom under Article 19 guarantees, among other things, that of practice of any lawful calling without restriction

The Constitution may thus be said to have abolished caste and its lingerring coercive practices. It is a solemn promise that the legislature will do everything possible to create a society in which inequality of status does not exist

Emerging Trends of Caste System in India

From the above brief discussion of the various measures that have been taken in India, it may be said that though the

influenceofcaste system is slowly decreasing yet it continues as before and there is very little change in the attitude and mentality of the people The village, the heart of Hindu social organization, is the seat of caste at its strongest The endogamous nature of caste has remained almost the same with this difference that whereas formerly marriage ouotisde the caste was not even thought of, today many young men and women are prepared to break through the caste if love-marriage demands it In such marriages the female partner belongs to a caste lower than that of the male partner The older generation, however, still thinks in old caste terms One has still to depend very largely on one's caste for help at critical periods of one's like marriage and death Many leaders in vivic life are associated with the movement of amelioration of their respective castes The elections in India are contested very much on the basis of casteism The voters are asked to vote for their caste candidates and thuys casteism is maintained by the elected leaders after the elections are over. Political parties also sponsor only that candidate from a particular constituency whose caste is the most numerous in that area Casteism stillpersists in government services and political elections SEats are reserved for backward and scheduled castes in government services as well as in the legislatures They are given special scholarships for education Caste journals have made their appearance. Thus the Indian democracy has in practice encouraged rather than discouraged the caste system *G S Ghurye* was right when he said that there is no fear of the extinction of the caste system in the near future "The difference between the old regime and contemporary society," as Ghurye states, "lies in this that whereas under the ancient organization the facts mentioned above were almost universally true, today there is a section of society the modern educated persons—small yet important, which has risen above all these restrictions" Attitudes of exclusiveness and distrust between scaste and caste still exist The recent atrocities on Harijans be landed aristocracy point to our failure to solve the problem of casteism No amount of more legislation can eradicate a, social institution which is 5,000 years old What is needed is to educate public opinion and denounce caste patriotism in unequivocal terms The Age long untouchability has been legally abolished still the stratification system is strongly embedded in Indian life The enthusiasm of youth will surely transcend the artificial barriers of caste With the spread of education and the consequent amelioration of economic position it is hoped the Ind.ian people will rise to the occasion and throw off the caste system

Class

The concept of *'Social Class'* has long been used by sociologists Some sociologists feel that it is not a useful concept They state that there are no definite boundaries or dividing lines for social classes, that persons placed in one class according to one measure belong in another class according to another, and that, consequently, the members of a *'Class'* differ from one another too greatly for the concept of class to be valid

The term 'social class', which is widely used in popoular as well as social stratification literature, has been defined in different ways

In the sense formulated by *Marx*, class refers to people who share a common situation in the organization of economic production Classes were conceived as structural runits of society and not as arbitrarily delineated strata or statistical categories In fact, the members of one class might fallinto different economic strata, and the members of an economic stratum might be members of more than one class For example, small business men differ from industrial workers in their relation to economic organisation, but they may have the same income and therefore 'belong' to the same income stratum

Max Weber distinguised three orders of stratification (1) The economic or class order, based upon class situation defined in a way similar to Marx (2) The social order, based upon the distribution of social honour, or status (3) The political order, based upon the distribution of power

Horton & Hunt have written in Sociology that "A social class may be defined as a stratum of peoople of similar position in the social status continuum "

According to *Walteer Goldschmidt*, "A social class is a segment of a society whose members share the same general status"

According to *Raymond B Cattell* "A class may therefore be characteristic of a particular community, region or national culture Position may depend upon pecuniary, occupational, military, or educational factors Class distinctions may reflect objective criteria, the opinions of persons outside the class, and class consciousness and other forms of self-feeling within it Class may, finally, be based upon power, prestige, wealth, or a combination of these and othere factors The delimitation of class membership is therefore a complex process The criteria may be objective and quantitative, as well as subjective and nonquantitative

In sociology class system is generally associated with achieved status and open stratification. Classes are important groups of the present capitalist industrial system. Individuals engaged in similar activities in the process of production, having equal economic status and similar life style belong to the same class Common economic interests and class consciousness are found among the members of a class.

There is no concrete, objective and scientific basis of the concept of class and of the criteria of class structure. Sociologists have considered the criteria of family, property, life style, prestige, residence in the prestigious localities in a city, house type, school for children, membership of associations and clubs, etc for determining class-states

Marx has emphasised the existence of classes as the basis of social structure According to Marx there are two classes·

1 Bourgeoisie

2 Proletariat

Tre capitalist class owns the means of production. The working class sells its labour to capitalist class in order to survive.

Marx provides a two-fold division of classes In fact, class structure is quite complex. Bottomore writes abaout four classes as follows

1 Upper class

2. Middle class

3 Working class

4 Peasantry

The upper class owns the economic resources Middle class comprises white collar workers and professional groups The working class includes industrial skilled and semi-skilled worekrs. Those who earn their livelihood by cultivation and allied occupations are included in the peasantry.

Considering the class structure of Britain onthe basis of the 1951 census—G D H Cole has raised theoretic and systematic questions regarding class—determination. The methods of class status determination propounded by Cole provide clear criteria and at the same time show the complexity of class-status determination Keeping in view the two methods of class-determination, the subjective and objective, Cole discusses three main facets of class- determination

The first one includes Marxist thinkers who believe that class is a factual reality According to this view an individual may

be included in a particular class on the basis of some clearly defined characteristics of his social position Objective criteria refer to individual's relationship with the process of production, property, residential area, type of house, income and the age at the leaving of school

The scholars of the second school emphasize the subjective criteria of class-determination One can directly ask the individual which class he belongs to and the class-determination based on his answer may be considered valid But this method has some limitations too What types of questions are to be asked ? Whether the investigator is providing the list of possible answers or is depending upon the respondent for answers ? Much depends on the answers to questions regarding subjective dispositions of an individual about his class in the wider society

Under the third current the individual's class is determined by the opinion of his friends and neighbours This method is the most difficult of all It requires an exhaustive questionnaire, and the answers depend on the nature of questions asked

At theoretic level Cole critically examines Marx's theory of class structure In Marx's class-structure the capitalist and the proletarian are related to the technology and system of production, while the middle class is just a residual category Peasants depend upon the traditional system of agriculture Marx pays no attention to the fact that the industrial system of production is giving rise to a new class of salaried people, including administrators, managers and individuals engaged in various professions The middle class has a tendency to become a fact of today's class-structure According to Cole another weakness of Marxian theory is that it does not distinguish between classes and professions He tends to merge them

Difference Between Caste & Class

A number of Sociologists have distinguished the concepts of caste and class

Ogburn and Nimkoff observe as follows "In some societies it is not uncommon for individuals to move up or down the social ladder Where this is the case the society is said to have 'open' classes Elsewhere there is little shifting, individuals remaining through a life-time in the class into which they change to be born Such classes are 'closed' and if, extremely differentiated constitute

a caste system" "When a class is somewhat strictly hereditary,"
says Cooley, "we may call it a caste."

Maclver observes, "Whereas in Eastern civilizations, the chief
determinant of a class and status was birth in the western
civilization of today wealth is a class determinant of equal or
perhaps greater importance, and wealth is a less rigid determinant
that birth, it is more concrete, and thus its claims are more easily
challenged, itself a matter of degree, it is less apt to create
distinctions of kind, alienable, acquirable and transferable, it draws
no such permanent lines of cleavage as does birth."

Warner and Davis write, 'Briefly, caste may be defined as a
rank order of superior superordinate orders with inferior
subordinate order which practise endogamy, prevent vertical
mobility, and unequally distribute the desirable and undesiragble
social symbols, Class amy be defined as a rank order of superior
and inferior orders which allow both exogamy and endogamy
permits movement either up or down the system, or allows an
individual to remain in the status to which he was born, it also
unequally distributes the lower and the higher evaluated symbols"

The fundamental points of difference between class and caste
are the following

(i) **Open vs. Closed :** Class is more open than caste Hiller
writes, "A class system is an open system or rating levels If a
hierarchy becomes closed against vertical mobility, it ceases to be
a class system and becomes a caste system" Since class is open
and elastic social mobility becomes easier A man can be his
enterprise and initiative change his class and thereby rise in social
status If a man is born in a labouring class, it is not necessary
for him to live in the class for life and die in it. He can strive for
money and success in life and with wealth he can change his social
status implied in the class distinction In case of caste system it
is impossible to change one's caste status. Once a man is born in
a caste he remains in it for his life-time and makes his children
suffer the same fate A caste is thus a closed class. The individual's
status is determined by the caste status of his parents, so that
what an individual does has little bearing upon his status On the
other hand the membership of a class does not depend upon
hereditary basis, it rather depends on the worldly achievements of
an individual Thus class system is an open and flexible system
while caste systemis a closed and rigid system.   .

- (ii) **Divine v.s Secular :** Secondly, the caste system is
believed to have been divinely ordained Maclver writes, 'The rigid

demarcation of caste could scarcely be maintained were if not for strong religious persuasions The hold of religious belief, with its supernatural explanations of caste itself is essential to the continuance of the system The Hindu caste structure may have arisen out of the subjection or enslavement incidental to conquest *and perhaps also out of the subordination of one endogamous communityto another* But the power, prestige and pride to race thus engendered could rise to a caste system, with it social separation of groups that are not in fact set apart by any clear social signs, only as the resulting situation was rationalised and made eternal by religious myths " Itis every body's religious duty to fulfil his caste duties in accordance with his 'dharma' In the Bhagavadgita the Creator is said to have apportioned the duty proper to his caste Failure to act according to one's caste duties meant birth in a lower caste and finally spiritual annihilation Men of the lower castes are reborn in higher castes if they have fulfilled their duties Caste system in India would not have survived for so many centuries if the religious system had not made it sacred and inviolable On the contrary, there is nothing sacred or or divine origin in the class stratification of society Classes are secular in origin They are not founded on religious dogmas

(iii) Endogamous : Thirdly, the choice of mates in caste system is generally endogamous Members have to marry within their own castes A member marrying outside his caste is treated as outcaste No such restrictions exist in class system A wealthy man may marry a poor girl without being outcasted An educated girl may marry an uneducated partner without being thrown out from the class of teachers.

(iv) Class Consciousness : Fourthly, the feeling of class consciousness is necessary to constitute a class but there is no need *for any subjective consciousness in the members of caste*

(v) Prestige : Fifthly, the relative prestige of the different castes is well established out in class system there is no rigidly fixed order of prestige

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Theories of Stratification

A number of explanations of social stratification have been formulated by a number of sociologists keeping in view it's various dimensions According to T B. Bottomore the theories of stratification may be devided into two major parts

1. **Functionalist Theories**
2. **Marxist Theories** (Dialectical Theories)

But, both the theories suffer from over-simplification. Hence it is not fair to connect all the works of socialstratification that has been done in the field of theories of social stratification to these two theories alone. For example, Max Weber has made a unique contribution to the theory of social stratification. Weber is neither a functionalist, nor a Marxist. Hence we are giving, here the significant and the prestigious theories of stratification.

Functionalist theories of stratification must be seen in the context of functionalist theories of society. When functional attempt to explain systems of social stratification, they state their explanations in the framework of larger theories which seek to explain the operation of society as a whole. They assume that there are certain basic needs or functional pre prequisites which must be met if society is to survive They therefore look to social stratification to see how far it meets these functional pre-requisites. They assume that the parts of society form an integrated whole and thus examine the ways in which the social stratification system is integrated with other parts of society. Functionalists maintain that a certain degree of order and stability are essential for the operation of social systems They will therefore consider how stratification systems help to maintain order and stability in seeiety In summary, functionalists are primarily concerned with the function of social stratification, with its contribution to the maintenance and well-being of society.

Talcott Parsons' Theory

Like many functionalists, American Talcott Parsons believes that order, stability and cooperation in society are based on value consensus, that is a general agreement by members of society concerning what is good and worth-while. Parsons argues that stratification systems derive from common values It follows from the existence of values that individuals will be evaluated and therefore placed in some form of rank order. In Parsons's words, 'Stratification, in its valuational aspect, then, is the ranking of units in a social system in accordance with the common value system' Thus those who perform successfully in terms of society's values will be ranked highly and they will be likely to receive a variety of rewards At a minimum they will be accorded high prestige since they exemplify and personify common values For example, if a society places a high value on bravery and generosity, as in the case of the Sioux Indians, those who excel in terms of these qualities will receive a high rank in the stratification system

The Sioux warrior who successfully raids the Crow and Pawnee, the traditional enemies of his tribe, captures horses and distributes them to others, may receive the following rewards He may be given a seat on the tribal council, a position of power and prestige His deeds will be recounted in the warrior societies and the squaws will sing of his exploits Other warriors will follow him in raids against neighbouring tribes and the success of these expeditions may lead to his appointment as a war chief In this way excellence in terms of Sioux values is rewarded by power and prestige Since different societies have different value systems, the ways of attaining a high position will vary from society to society Parsons argues that American society values individual achievement, *efficiency* and 'puts *primary emphasis on productive activity within* the economy Thus the successful business executive who has achieved his position through his own initiative, ability and ambition, and runs an efficient and productive business will receive high rewards

Parsons's argument suggests that stratification is an inevitable part of all human societies If value consensus is an essential component of all societies, then it follows that some form of stratification will result from the ranking of individuals in terms of common values It also follows from Parsons's argument that there is a general belief that stratification systems are just, right and proper, since they are basically an expression of shared values Thus the American business executive is seen to deserve his rewards because members of society place a high value on his skills *and achievements This is not to say there is no conflict between* the haves and have-nots, the highly rewarded and those who receive little reward Parsons recognizes that in Western industrial society 'There will be certain tendencies to arrogance on the part of some winners and to resentment and to a 'sour grapes' attitude on the part of some losers However, he believes that this conflict is kept in check by the common value system which justifies the unequal distribution of rewards

Functionalists tend to see the relationship between social groups in society as one of cooperation and interdependence Particularly in complex industrial societies, different groups specialize in particular activities As no one group is self sufficient it cannot meet the needs of its members It must, therefore, exchange goods and services with other groups, and so the *relationship between social groups is one of reciprocity This* relationship extends to the strata in a stratification system T~

present an oversimplified example, it can be argued that many occupational groups within the middle class in Western society plan, organize and coordinate the activities of the working class. Each class needs and cooperates with the other since any large-scale task requires both organization and execution. In societies with a highly specialized division of labour, such as industrial societies, some members will specialize in organization and planning, others will follow their directives Talcott Parsons argues that this inevitably leads to inequality in terms of power and prestige Referring to Western society, he states that, 'Organization on an ever increasing scale is a fundamental feature of such a system Such organization naturally involves centralization and differentiation of leadership and authority, so that those who take responsibility for coordinating the actions of many others must have a different status in important respects from those who are essentially in the role of carrying out specifications laid down by others' Thus those with the power to organize and coordinate the activities of others will have a higher social status than those they direct

As with prestige differentials, Parsons argues that inequalities of power are based on shared values Power is legitimate authority in that it is generally accepted as just and proper by members of society as a whole It is accepted as such because those in positions of authority use their power to pursue collective goals which derive from society's central values Thus the power of the American business executive is seen as legitimate authority because it is used to further productivity, a goal shared by all members of society This use of power therefore serves the interests of society as a whole.

Parsons sees social stratification as both inevitable and functional for society It is inevitable because it derives from shared values which are a necessary part of all social systems It is functional because it serves to integrate various groups in society. Power and prestige differentials are essential for the coordination and integration of a specialized division of labour. Without social inequality, Parsons finds it difficult to see how members of society could effectively cooperate and work together. Finally, inequalities of power and prestige benefit all members of society since they serve to further collective goals which are based on shared values. Parsons has been strongly criticized on all these points. Other sociologists have seen it as an arrangement whereby some gain at the expense of others   They have questioned the view that

stratification systems derive ultimately from shared values These criticisms will be examined in detail in later sections ᵻ

Kingsley Davis and Wilbert E. Moore's Theory

The most famous functionalist theory of stratification was first presented in 1945, in an article by the American sociologists Davis and Moore entitled, *Some Principles of Stratification* Davis and Moore begin with the observation that stratification exists in every known human society They attempt to explain 'in functional terms, the universal necessity which calls forth stratification in any social system They argue that all social systems share certain functional pre requisites which must be met if the system is to survive and operate efficiently One such functional prerequisite is effective role allocation and performance This means that firstly, all roles must be filled, secondly that they be filled by those best able to perform them, thirdly that the necessary training for them be undertaken and fourthly that the roles be performed conscientiously Davis and Moore argue that all societies need some mechanism for insuring effective role allocation and performance This mechanism is social stratification which they see as a system which attaches unequal rewards and privileges to the different positions in society

If the people and positions which make up society did not differ in important respects there would be no need for stratification. However, people differ in terms of their innate ability and talent. Positions differ in terms of their importance for the survival and maintenance of society Certain positions are more 'functionally important' than others They require special skills for their effective performance and there are a limited number of individuals with the necessary ability to acquire such skills A major function of stratification is to match the most able people with the functionally most important positions It does this by attaching high rewards to these positions The desire for such rewards motivates people to compete for them and in theory the most talented will win through Such positions usually require long periods of training which involve certain sacrifices such as loss of income The promise of high rewards is necessary to provide an incentive to encourage people to undergo this training and to compensate them for the sacrifice involved It is essential for the well-being of society that those who hold the functionally most

important positions perform their roles diligently and conscientiously The high rewards built into these positions provide the necessary inducement and generate the required motivation for such performance Thus Davis and Moore conclude that social stratification is a device by which societies insure that the most important positions are conscientiously filled by the most qualified persons'

Davis and Moore realise that one difficulty with their theory is to show clearly which positions are functionally most important. The fact that a position is highly rewarded does not necessarily mean it is functionally important They suggest that the importance of a position can be measured in two ways Firstly by the 'degree to which a position is functionally unique, there being no other positions that can perform the same function Thus it could be argued that a doctor is functionally more important than a nurse since his position carries with it many of the skills necessary to perform a nurse's role but not vice versa The second measure of importance is the 'degree to which other positions are dependent on the one in questions Thus it may be argued that managers are more important than routine office staff since the latter are dependent on direction and organization from management

To summarize, Davis and Moore regard social stratification as a 'functional necessity' for all societies They see it as a solution to a problem faced by all social systems, that of 'placing and motivating individuals in the social structure They offer no other means of solving this problem and imply that social inequality is an inevitable feature of human society. They conclude that differential rewards are functional for society, that they contribute to the maintenance and well-being of social systems

Malvin Tumin summarises Davis-Moore theory as follows .

(1) Certain positions in any society are functionally more important than others, and require special skills for performing them

(2) Only a limited number of individuals in any society have the talents which can be trained into the skills appropriate of these positions.

(3) The conversion of talents into skills involves a training period during which sacrifices of one kind or another are made by those under going the training

(4) In order to induce the talented persons to undergo these sacrifices and acquire the training, their future positions must carry and inducement value in the form of differential

- 1.e , privileged and disproportionate access to the scarce and desired rewards which the society has to offer
  (5) These scarce and desired goods consist of the rights and perquisites too, or 'built into' those things which contribute to
  - (a) sustenance and comfort,
  - (b) humour and diversion, and
  - (c) self-respect and expansion
  (6) This differential access to the basic rewards of the society has as a consequence on the differentiation of the prestige and esteem which various strate require This maybe said alongwith the rights and perquisites to constitute institutionalised social inequality, 1 e , stratification
  (7) Therefore, social inequality among different start in the amounts of prestige which they receive, is both positively functional and inevitable in any society

Malvin M. Tumin's Theory

Davis and Moore's views provoked a long debate Tumin, their most famous opponent, has produced a comprehensive criticism of their theory He begins by questioning the adequacy of their measurement of the functional importance of positions Davis and Moore have tended to assume that the most highly rewarded positions are indeed the most important However, many occupations which afford little prestige or economic reward can be seen as vital to society Thus, Tumin argues that '*some* labour force of unskilled workmen is as important and as indispensable to the factory as *some* labour force of engineers' In fact a number of sociologists have argued that there is no objective way of measuring the functional importance of positions Whether one considers lawyers and doctors as more important than farm labourers and refuse collectors is simply a matter of opinion

Tumin argues that Davis and Moore have ignored the influence of power on the unequal distribution of rewards Thus differences in pay and prestige between occupational groups may be due to differences in their power rather than their functional importance For example, the difference between the wages of farm labourers and coal miners can be interpreted as a result of the bargaining power of the two groups This point will be examined in detail in later sections

Davis and Moore assume that only a limited number of individuals have the talent to acquire the skills necessary for the functionally most important positions Tumin regards this as a very questionable assumption Firstly, as the chapter on education will indicate, an effective method of measuring talent and ability has yet to be devised. Secondly, there is no proof that exceptional talents are required for those positions which Davis and Moore consider important Thirdly, the chapter on education will suggest that the pool of talent in society may be considerably larger than Davis and Moore assume. As a result, unequal rewards may not be necessary to harness it.

Tumin also questions the view that the training required for important positions should be regarded as a sacrifice and therefore in need of compensation He points to the rewards of begin a student-leisure, freedom and the opportunity for self-development He notes that any loss of earnings can usually be made up during the first ten years of work. Differential rewards during this period may be justified However, Tumin sees no reason for continuing this compensation for the rest of an individual's working life

According to Davis and Moore, the major function of unequal rewards is to motivate talented individuals and allocate them to the functionally most important positions Tumin rejects this view He argues that social stratification can, and often does, act as a barrier to the motivation and recruitment of talent This is readily apparent in closed systems such as caste and racial stratification. Thus the ascribed status of untouchables prevented even the most talented from becoming Brahmins, Until recently, the ascribed status of Blacks in the USA blocked all but a handful from political office and highly rewarded occupations Thus closed stratification systems operate in exactly the opposite way to Davis and Moore's theory

Tumin suggests, however, that even relatively open systems of stratification erect barriers to the motivation and recruitment of talent As the chapter on education will show, there is considerable evidence to indicate that the class system in Western industrial society limits the possibilities of the discovery and utilization of talent. In general, the lower an individual's class position, the more likely he is to leave school at the minimum leaving age and the less likely he is to aspire to and strive for a highly rewarded position. Thus the motivation to succeed is unequally distributed throughout the class system As a result social class can act as an obstacle to the motivation of talent. In

addition, Tumin argues that Davis and Moore have failed to consider the possibility that those who occupy highly rewarded positions will erect barriers to recruitment Occupational groups often use their power to restrict access to their positions, so creating a high demand for their services and increasing the rewards they receive Tumin claims that the American Medical Association has been guilty of this practice By its control of entry into the profession, it has maintained a shortage of doctors and so ensured high rewards for medical services In this way the self- interested use of power can restrict the recruitment of talented individuals to highly rewarded positions

Tumin concludes that stratification, by its very nature, can never adequately perform the functions which Davis and Moore assign to it He argues that those born into the lower strata can never have the same opportunities for realizing their talents as those born into the higher strata Tumin maintains that, 'It is only when there is a genuinely equal access to recruitment and training for all potentially talented persons that differential rewards can conceivably be justified as functional And stratification systems are apparently *inherently antagonistic* to the development of such full equality of opportunity

Finally, Tumin questions the view that social stratification functions to integrate the social system. He argues that differential rewards can 'encourage hostility, suspicion and distrust among the various segments of a society' From this viewpoint, stratification is a divisive rather than an integrating force Stratification can also weaken social integration by giving members of the lower strata a feeling of being excluded from participation in the larger society   This is particularly apparent in systems of racial stratification For example, the saying 'On the outside looking in', is a typical phrase from traditional Black American subculture. By tending to exclude certain groups from full participation in society, stratification 'serves to distribute loyalty unequally in the population' and therefore reduces the potential for social solidarity Tumin concludes that in their enthusiastic search for the positive functions of stratification, the functionalists *have tended to ignore or play down its many dysfunctions*

After discussing Davis and Moore's theory and the Melvin M. Tumin's theory of social stratification it would better to understand the criticism of Davis and Moore's theory. Melvin Tumin refers to 'dysfunctions' of stratification and enumerates eight dysfunctions These are briefly as follows

(1) Social stratification systems function to limit the possibility of discovery of the full range of talent available in a given society. This results from the fact of unequal access to appropriate motivation, channels of recruitment and centres of training

(2) In foreshortening the range of available talent, social stratification system function to set limits upon the possibility of expanding the productive resources of the society atleast relative to what might be the case under conditions of greater equality of opportunity.

(3) Social stratification system function to provide the elite with the political power necessary to procure acceptance and dominance of an ideology which rationalizes the Status-quo, spreading conservative influences

(4) Social stratification systems function to distribute favourable self-image unequally throughout a population which inhibit the development of creative potential of the very same persons

(5) Social stratification systems function to encourage hostility suspicion and distrust among the various segments of a society which limit extensive social integration because of the 'sense of significant membership'

(6) Because of the sense of significant membership, social stratification systems function to distribute unequally the 'sense of significant membership'

(7) Consequently, social stratification systems function to distribute loyalty unequally in the population

(8) Finally, the motivation to participate is found unequal because of apathy created by this sense of significant membership

Tumin has made several other criticism of this approach This is some ignorance regarding the amount of talent present in the population Role of peasants' wealth or wealth as a factors in education cannot be assessed easily Unequal distribution of rewards in on generation perpetuates in the second and successive generations This affects search, recruitment and training of personnel. The concept of 'sacrifice' is only a rationalisation of selfish nature, sacrifice is not made for altruistic purposes A consideration of sacrifice and commensurate rewards ignores role of psychic and spiritual rewards, 'joy in work' intinct for 'workmanship', 'Social Duty', etc. 'Rewards' are not resources, rather they are consequences. The real resources are power and wealth contributing to rewards

Walter Buckley observes that *Kingsley Davis* confuses between specialised roles i e, differentiation and stratification Social stratification is a system of unequally privileged groups, whereas differentiation is a functional requirement without necessarily giving way to corresponding inequalities What is considered differentiation by Davis according to *M G Smith* it amounts to stratification in some tribal communities because age-sets or sex roles are the basis of high and low in those societies These factors do not involve a system of selection as suggested by Davis but are ascriptive criteria Thus, the anthropologist's view of stratification is different from that of the Sociologists' view Davis considers this only a terminological question

Dennis H Wrong comments that the functional theory is too general It does not fell about range of inequality and the determinants of range in concrete societies It also ignores the disruptive consequences of mobility and inequality of opportunity *George A Huaco* while considering unequal rewards, institution of family and differential scarcity of qualified personnel as the causes of stratification makes two critical observations about Davis Moore theory

(1) Davis and Moore seemed to be describing all stratification systems as if they were pure achievement systems.

(2) They seemed to suggest that the rich, powerful and prestigious were not only the more talented and better trained but also the incumbents of roles which made a greater contribution to societal preservation and survival

Huaco refers about 'functional alternatives' to inequality Changes in the positional structure may threaten the basic postulates of the theory prompting a revision or rejection of it Changes in the characteristics of population may also lead to negation of the theory But I feel that the functional theory is based on certain analytic statements, and therefore, it would be logically wrong to attack the theory on the basis of certain empiric situations

Richard L Simpson also refers to the difficulties of evaluation of a position, non functionality, disproportionate rewards, and a prior assumptions of this theory Davis considers these criticisms as irrelevant to his basic premises

Michael Young's Theory

Many of the criticisms of Davis and Moore's views have been based on evidence which indicates that no stratification system

operates as their theory argues Even in the relatively open systems of Western industrial societies, there is considerable evidence to suggest that large numbers of able and talented individuals remain in the lower strata Research has also indicated that many members of the upper strata owe their position primarily to the fact that they have been born into those strata and have capitalized on the advantages provided by their social background In a brilliant satire entitled *The Rise of the Meritocracy*, Michael Young imagines a future British society in which talent and social roles would be perfectly matched, in which the most able individuals would be achieved on the basis of merit in a society where all members have an equal opportunity to realize their talents Following Michael Young's usage of the term, such a system of role allocation has come to be known as a meritocracy

Despite removing the most obvious criticism of Davis and Moore's theory, Young questions the proposition that a stratification system based on meritocratic principles would be functional for society He notes the following dysfunctional possibilities Firstly, members of the lower strata may become totally demoralized In all previous stratification systems they have been able to divert blame from themselves for their lowly status by providing reasons for their failure They could claim that they never had the opportunity to be successful whereas those who filled the top jobs owed their position to their relatives, friends and the advantages of birth However, in a meritocracy, those at the bottom are clearly inferior As a result they may become demoralized since, as Young states, 'Men who have lost their self- respect are liable to lose their inner vitality' Since all members of a meritocracy are socialized to compete for the top jobs and instilled with ambition, failure could be particularly frustrating Young argues that, 'When ambition is crossed with stupidity it may do nothing besides foster frustration' In a meritocracy, talent and ability are efficiently syphoned out of the lower strata As a result these groups are in a particularly vulnerable position because they have no abl'' members to represent their interests

Members of the upper strata in a meritocracy deserve their position, their privileges are based on merit In the past they had a degree of self-doubt because many realized that key owed their position to factors other than merit Since they could recognize 'intelligence' wit and wisdom' in members of the lower strata, they appreciated that their social inferiors were at least their equal in certain respects As a result they would accord the lower orders some respect and the arrogance which high status tends to

encourage would be tempered with a degree of humility All this may change in a meritocracy Social inferiors really are inferior, those who occupy the top positions are undoubtedly superior Young argues that this may result in an upper stratum free from self-doubt and the restraining influence of humility Its members may rule society with arrogance and haughty self-assurance They may despise the lower strata whose members may well find such behaviour offensive This may result in conflict between the ruling minority and the rest of society

Although Young's picture of a meritocracy is functional, it indicates many of the possible dysfunctional elements of such a system It suggests that a society based on meritocratic principles may not be well integrated It indicates that a stratification system which operates in this way may, on balance, be dysfunctional Young's ideas are important because they cast serious doubt on liberal views of a just society As the chapter on education will illustrate, many liberal reforms have aimed to create greater *equality of opportunity, to give every member of society an equal chance of becoming unequal* Michael Young's picture of a fully operative meritocracy suggests that the liberal dream of a fair and just society may produce a far from perfect reality

Eva Rosenfeld's Theory

So far, criticism of functionalist theories has been concerned with the view that stratification is functional This section turns to the functionalists' claim that stratification is inevitable The chapter began by posing the possibility of an egalitarian society, a society without social inequality An example of one attempt to translate this idea into reality is provided by the Israeli Kibbutzim system In Israel about 4% of the population live in some 240 kibbutzim These communities have an average population of between 200 and 700 and an economic base of agriculture plus some light industry Many kibbutzim are founded on the Marxist principle of 'from everyone according to ability—to everyone according to need', the guiding ideal being the creation of an egalitarian society Property such as machinery, buildings and produce is communally owned Commodities such as clothing, shoes and toiletries are distributed to members according to their need Services such as cooking, laundry and the education of children are freely available to all Wages as such and therefore wage differentials do not exist in many kibbutzim Stratification in terms of wealth is thus absent All major decisions are taken by a general assembly in which each adult member of a kibbutz has the right

to vote It would therefore appear that power to the people has become a reality

Despite these arrangements designed to create an egalitarian society, social inequality exists in the kibbutzim. From her research, Eva Rosenfeld had identified two distinct social strata which are clearly recognized by members The upper stratum is made up of 'leader-managers', who are elected by members of the kibbutz and are responsible for the day-to-day running of the community. The lower stratum consists of the 'rank and file', the agricultural labourers and machine operatives Authority and prestige are not equally distributed The right to organize and direct the activities of others is built into the role of leader-manager In addition the status itself carries high prestige Rosenfeld notes that leader-managers are 'respected for their contribution to the communal enterprise as leaders, organizers, managers of farms and shops'. Rosenfeld also identifies an 'unequal distribution of seemingly crucial emotional gratifications' Managers obtain more satisfaction from their work than the rank and file In the words of one old-timer, members of the rank and file sometimes ask, 'What the hell am I breaking my neck for ? What do I get out of this ?' There is evidence of a conflict of interest between the two strata Managers call for 'ever greater effort and self sacrifice' whereas the rank and file are often apathetic to such exhortations and concerned with more immediate rises in their living standards Managers are sometimes accused of not knowing 'what kibbutz life tastes like' while they in turn sometimes accuse the rank and file of insufficient effort and failing to appreciate the long-term goals of the kibbutz

Rosenfeld's study lends some support to the functionalist claim that social stratification, at least in terms of power and prestige, is inevitable in human society The position of leader-manager in the kibbutz carries authority and commands high prestige Those who occupy such positions form a fairly distinct social stratum Talcott Parsons has argued that any division of labour requires an authority structure to organize and coordinate the various specialized tasks involved He also maintains that in order to operate effectively, positions of authority must carry higher prestige than positions subject to that authority. Despite the logic of these arguments and the evidence which supports them, they do not prove that social stratification is inevitable Simply because

the egalitarian society has yet to become a reality does not mean it is not possible

Karl Marx's Theory

Marxist or dialectical theorist provides a radical alternative to functionalist view of the nature of social stratification They *regard stratification as a divisive rather than an integrative structure* They see it as a mechanism whereby some exploit others rather than a means of furthering collective goals They focus on social strata rather than social inequality in general Functionalists *such as* Parsons and Davis and Moore say little *about social* stratification in the sense of clearly defined social strata whose members have shared interests However, this view of social stratification is central to Marxian theory

Marx's views will first be briefly summarized and then examined in more detail

The concept of history of Karl Marx is known as dialectical materialism or historical materialism "To Marx" explains Larson "matter is not a product of mind on the contrary, mind is simply the most advanced product of matter Though Marx rejected Hegel's content orientation, he retained his dialectical structure " Historical materialism is the Marxist theory of society This is clear in a detailed passage in the Preface to A *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* The general conclusion at which I arrived and which, once obtained, served to guide me in my studies, may be summarised as follows In the social production which men carry on they enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, these relations of production correspond to definite stage of development of their material powers of production The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society the real foundation on which rise legal and political super-structures and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness The mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political and spiritual processes of life It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but on the contrary, their social existence determines their consciousness At a certain stage of their development, the material forces of production in society come into conflict with the existing relations of production, or what is but a legal expression for the same thing with the property relations within which they had been at work

From forms of development of the forces of production, these
relations turn into their fetters Then comes the period of social
revolution With the change of the economic foundation the entire
immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed In
considering such transformation the distinction should always be
made between the material transformation of the economic
conditions of production which can be determined with the precision
of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, aesthetic or
philosophic—in short ideological—forms in which men become
conscious of this conflict and fight it out Just as our opinion of an
individual is not based on what he thinks of himself, so we cannot
judge of such a period of transformation by its own consciousness,
on the contrary this consciousness must rather be explained from
the contradictions of material life, from the existing conflict between
the social forces of production and the relations of production No
social order ever disappears before all the productive forces, for
which there is room in it, have been developed, and the new higher
relations of production never appear before the material conditions
of their existence have matured in the womb of the old society
Therefore, mankind always takes up only such problems as it can
solve, since, looking at the matter more closely, we will always
find that the problem itself arises only when the material conditions
necessary for its solutions already exist or are at least in the process
of formation In broad outlines we can designate the Asiatic, the
ancient, the feudal, and the modern bourgeois methods of
production as so many epochs in the progress of the economic
formation of society The bourgeois relations of production are the
last antagonistic form of the social process of production-
antagonistic not in the sense of individual antagonism, but of one
arising from conditions surrounding the life of individual in society,
at the same time the productive forces developing in the womb of
bourgeois society create the material conditions for the solution of
that antagonism This social formation constitutes, therefore, the
closing chapter of the pre-historic stage of human society '

The above passage expresses all the essential ideas of
Marxist economic interpretation of history. These essential ideas
are as follows

1 Men enter into definite relations by the force of economic
circumstances such as the forces and relations production Thus
historical processes are determined by economic forces

2 The infra structure of a society includes forces and relations of production On this is based the superstructure of legal and political institutions as well as ways of thinking ᛎ †

3 The mechanism of the historical movement is the contradiction between the forces and relations of production

4 This contradiction leads to class struggle which, according to Karl Marx, is the main factor in historical evolution

5 The dialectics of the forces and relations of production implies a theory of revolution

6 Social reality governs consciousness and not vice versa

7 The stages of human history may be distinguished on the basis of their economic mode of production These stages are the Asiatic, the ancient, the feudal, and the bourgeois These four modes are again classified into the ancient and the modern Asiatic mode of production does not constitute a stage in the history of western society

To sum up "Science and society's experience throughout history refutes the views of bourgeois sociologists and demonstrates that the development of society is forward, natural, historical process which follows objective laws independent of man The history of society is an endless chain of development, revolutionary transitions from the simpler, lower formations to more complex higher ones Social progress depends on the development and improvement of material production Production has developed from the simplest tools, the sticks and stones man used in his struggle for life, to the latest automatic machines and equipments driven by electric power and atomic energy As production advances, other spheres of social life also develop "

Stages of Human History

The last theme contained in Karl Marx's *The Communist Manifesto* is the stages of human history Just as Auguste Comte differentiated moments of *human evolution on the basis of ways* of thinking, so Karl Marx differentiated stages of human history on the basis of their economic regimes, and he distinguished four of these or in his terminology four modes of production which he called the Asiatic, the Ancient, the Feudal and the Bourgeoise

Being a materialist, Marl Marx looks upon thoughts as based on facts According to Marx, "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but on the contrary, it is their social existence that determines their consciousness " In this way, social laws change along with the history of social and economic evolution In these changes, the three foregoing laws apply There

have always been conflicting classes in society Form historical
evidence, these conflicting classes have three major forms (1)
Society of slave tradition (2) Aristocratic society and (3) Capitalist
society According to Marx, it is only a communist society which
can resolve this conflict

Even the economic basis of social evolution has two parts -
(1) means of production (2) economic relations The first comprises
machines and second ownership and ways of distribution etc. The
order of society underwent a change with the development of the
chaos With the development of agricultural implements, it entered
into a state of agriculture Industrial age was conceived with the
discovery of industrial machinery In the same way society
underwent important changes with the entry of banks and currency
into the medium of distribution

Modes of Production

Thus, the history of society is the history of the development
and the law governed succession of the modes of production The
succession passes through five stages or five consecutive modes of
production Primitive, Communal, Slave, Feudal, Capitalist and
Socialist

1. **Primitive Society :** This was the first and the lowest
form of organisation of people It existed for thousands of years
In this stage men utilised primitive implements By these they
improved their work The relations of production and the productive
forces were on a lower level Everything was done on communal
basis The people tilled the communal land together with common
tools and living in a common dwelling, sharing products equally
The productive forces developed slowly With the growth of the
labour productivity the clan began to break into families The family
became the owner of the means of production Thus arose private
property and with it social inequality This resulted into the first
antagonistic classes, masters and slaves

2. **Slave society :** In the earlier stages of human society,
called primitive communism by Marx, it was a community in
society Men were few People did not have the sense of
accumulation But when man started using the result of one day's
labour over a number of days, the tendency to accumulation
increased This was the beginning of the convention of wealth

Ownership over objects spread to ownership over men
because slaves helped to increase the inflow of objects In this way
slave and master classes came into being in society and

consequently, grew master and slave morality was service of masters There was a vast gulf between the lives of the two This increased dissatisfaction which, in its turn, led to class conflict Slaves revolted against the masters for equal rights

3. Feudal Society : As time passed the master did concede some rights to slaves They possessed some ownership over land but a major portion of the yield still went to the master It was the inception of lordship society In this society, too, there were two conflicting classes—serfs and lords This society became more and more complex Lords were superceded by lords and the by kings or emperors The serfs laboured and the lords or kings benefited In order to give sanction to the authority of kings and lords, religion was resorted to

In this way, religious ethics was born Heaven and hell were imagined God was recognised as the religious emperor under whom were many gods and goddesses The serf was taught to pray to this God and to rest satisfied with his lot, which was allocated to him by God It was God who had vested authority in the king There were lords authorised by the king Thus to obey their orders was the duty of the public There was a vast difference in the status of the ruler and the ruled

4. Capitalist society : Thus the conflict became more grave This conflict rooted out the lordship system On the other side, steam was discovered in the forces of production and factories worked on steam engines This created the labour class The lords *abandoned their dukedoms and entered the industrial field They* created the capitalist or owner classes They joined hands with businessmen and white collared middle class people Thus, society was again stratified into two layers or classes the bourgeois and the proletariat or labour class This is the present state of society In the bourgeois and proletariat morality too, there is a tremendous conflict as in all conflicting classes The policy of the bourgeois is one of exploitation They have nothing to do with the problems of the proletariat Resorting to secular orders, laws of action and religion, they preach lessons of humbleness and patience to the labourers

5. Communist Society : The fifth and the last mode of production, according to Karl Marx, is socialist The socialist mode of production, in contrast to the capitalist is based on social owner ship The productive forces and production relations are governed by socialist ownership characterised by cooperation and mutual assistance In socialist society relations of production conform of

the character of the productive forces However, contradictions in it are only removed in communism which requires better forces of social production This is the society aimed at after revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist society It will be marked by the most perfect relations between free people of high intelligence and alround development. Rational distribution of the productive forces will be done on full scale The cultural and technical level of the workers will rise This communist society, according to Marx, is the future society aimed at by all development and revolution. This is best defined by the party programme in USSR in these words, "Communism is a classless social system with one form of public ownership of the means of production and full social equality of all members of society under it, the al-round development of people will be accompanied by the growth of the productive forces through continuous progress in science and technology, all the springs of cooperative wealth will flow more abundantly, and the great principle From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs will be implemented Communism is a highly organised society of free, socially concious working people in which public self-government will be established, a society in which labour for the good of society will become life's prime want of everyone, a necessity recognised by one and all, and the ability of each person will be employed to the greatest benefit of the people "

In this way, according to Karl Marx, the social ideals of an age depend upon its social and economic circumstances Means of production and means of distribution undergo change and with them change the social order, as well as the form of the conflicting classes and even the nature of morality The only true morality is exemplified by the exploited class because it gravitates us towards the ideal society, a communist order In the history of social evolution we discern that the exploiters of society were always conflicting whereas the exploited class because it gravitates us towards the ideal society, a communist order In the history of social evolution we discern that the exploiters of society were always conflicting whereas the exploited were always friendly and loving This conflict can be resolved only in a classless society Capitalism will vanish effortlessly in time and the age of the proletariat will come According to Marx the social order of such an age has two states socialism and communism. In socialism every worker will get wages according to his needs. In the communist state the class struggle will come to an end The disparity between mental and physical labour will lose recognisation and the

government and religion will be destroyed Only then will true morality be conceived As Engles expresses it, "A really human morality which transcends class antagonism and their legacies in thought becomes possible only at a stage of society which has not only overcome class antagonism but has even forgott n them in life"

Vilfredo Pareto's Theory

In relating the governing elite concept to psychological type, and even more importantly to vertical mobility, Pareto stands alone Contemporary political science finds the elite concept indispensible if only as a hypothesis to be rejected From the Paretoin approach have sprung such radical reappraisals of democracy as that of Schumpeter for whom it is a system in which elites publicly compete for the authority to govern The work inter relates elites, government and social structure The studies of community power structure of Hunter argue for the presence of an unidentifiable elite The great programme of comparative elite studies was carried out by Basswell and his school

Pareto has developed his idea of elites in an original way He has, in the main, discussed the class of governing elites According to Pareto all men are not equal They differ among themselves in regards to their capacities and abilities Some are more intelligent, efficient and capable than others On account of this difference in regard to abilities, there is social stratification Some belong to superior class by virtue of higher qualifications Defining the class of elites, Pareto says, "So let us make a class of people who have the highest indices in their branch of activity, and to that class give the name elites The elite form the upper classes and are usually also the riches" Thus, in every sphere of social activity there is a class of superior persons which is termed elite

Two types of definition have been given to the term elite - a broad and a narrow definition The broad definition includes the whole socialelite while the narrow definition refers to only the governing elite According to Pareto, "By elite we mean the small number of individuals who, in each sphere of activity, have succeeded and have arrived at a high echelon in the professional hierarchy" Examples of this class are the successful businessman, successful artist, the successful professor This definition is objective and natural However, in the narrow definition elite

means the governing class It is on the nature of governing elites that societies are characterised as totalitarian or democratic The governing elite is the small number of individuals who have succeeded and who exercised ruling functions politically or socially Pareto agrees with Machiavelli that the elite governed the many by force The masses allow themselves to be governed by the elite The elite control the means of force because they succeed in convincing the many. According to Pareto a legitimate government is one which succeeds in persuading the governed to obey them

CLASSES OF ELITES

Pareto had distinguished two classes of elites These are

1. Governing Elites : In this class are included persons who are directly or indirectly concerned with administration These persons play highly important role and enjoy prestigious place in society According to Pareto, the elite class may be divided into categories "a governing elite, comprising individuals who, tly or indirectly, play some considerable part in government, and a non-governing elite comprising the rest "

2. Non-Governing Elites : In this class are included persons who are not connected with administration but occupy such a place in society that they somehow influence the administration

On the basis of the method to control the masses by force or fraud Pareto classifies the governing elite into 'lions' and the 'foxes' In the economic field this classification may be compared to 'rentiers' and 'speculators' Explaining his concept of lions and foxes Pareto points out that the lions are conservative elites having faith and ideology, displaying group loyality and class solidarity and gainining and regaining power by the use of force The foxes, on the other hand, are capable of innovation and experiments, materialistic, lacking fidelity to principle, and using fraud as a method for gaining and regaining power Both these types of elites may be found in political field in every society According to Pareto, history is 'a grave-yard of aristocracies ' Ruling elites circulate, emerge, dominate, fall and replace by new elite Explaining the counter parts of these political types of elite in the economic field Pareto writes, "In the speculator group Class I residues predominate, in the rentier group, Class I residues .   The two groups perform functions of differing utility in society. The (speculator) group is primarily responsible for change, for economic and social progress The (rentier) group, instead, is a powerful element in stability, and in many cases counteracts the dangers attending the adventurous captures of the (speculators) A society

in which (the speculators) predominate lacks stability, lives in state of shaky equilibrium that may be upset by a slight accident from within or from without " According to Pareto, social order requires a judicious mixture of elites of men with class I and class II residues, lions and foxes, speculators and rentiers Whenever this equibrium is broken, social change or revolution occurs and new types of elites are born

The discussion shows the following basic characteristics of elites

    1   There are two types of elites, the governing and non-governing elites The persons not belonging to either of the above category are called non-elite

    2   The elite manipulate overtly the political power

    3   The class of elite is universal It is to be found in every society Whatever type or method of administration may be in any country, there is found to be a class of superior persons which is directly or indirectly concerned with it

According to Pareto there are two fundamental features which contribute to the formation of elites These are

1. Qualities : The intelligence, the mathematical ability, the love of fine arts and high moral calibre are some of the qualities which make person superior to others These qualities also contribute to make riches and therefore we normally find that elites belong to the classes of rich people

2. Riches : As observed above, the better class of persons are also rich It is normal that men of superior qualities should become rich It is normal that men of superior qualities should become rich As Pareto says, "The so-called upper classes are also usually the riches " These classes represent an elite

CIRCULATION OF ELITES

In every society there are two main groups The one is concerned with the government and usually controls the means of production and is, therefore, rich The other group is constitute by those who are poor and governed The fact is expressed by saying that in every society we find upper and lower classes The upper classes are elite and the lower are non elite However, the distinction of elite and non elite is neither permanent nor fixed there is up and down movement of members of elite and the non-elite may rise to the level of elite This exchange between classes is technically known as circulation of elites No society can maintain status quo indefinitely, there are bound to be changes

which may adversely effect the elite and help the non-elite Though the governing class does its best to prevent the entry of the members of non-governing class into fold, it is not always successful in this As Pareto observes, history is a graveyard of aristocracies They do not last long, they are doomed to disappear by thinking down of their membership

The up-and-down movement of elites takes place in two ways. Firstly, some non-elite, by their merit, may rise to the level of elite and secondary, by revolution the entire governing class may be reduced to the status of the governed Indeed, in the opinion of Pareto, circulation of elites is necessary for healthy social change A slowing down of this circulation of elite may result in a considerable increase of the degenerate elements in the classes which still hold power, and, on the other hand, in an increase of elements of superior quality in subject classes In such a case the social equilibrium becomes unstable and the slightest shock will destroy it. A conquest or revolution produces an upheaval which brings a new elite to power and establishes a new equilibrium.

According to Pareto the circulation of elites is due to acquisition or loss of qualities or merits The persons who acquire merit move upward and those who become degenerate lose the membership of class.

The general mechanism of society, according to Pareto, can be understood by interest, residues, derivations and social hetrogeneity. These four major variables on which the movement of society depends are in a state of mutual dependence This is against Marxist principle of economic determinism Social hetrogeneity is the rivalry of elites, the struggle between the masses and the elite The theory of circulation of elites has been explained in the famous statement of Pareto, "History is a graveyard of aristocracies " The history of societies is the history of a succession of privileged minorities, the elites which appear, struggle, take power, enjoy that power, and fall into decadence, to be replaced by other minorities. This circulation of elites is caused by the following reasons :

1. **Wars :** Military aristocracies are exhausted by their frequent participation in wars

2. **Passage of generations :** In the normal process after the passage of some generations, aristocracies loose their capacity for violence and hence loose their vitality. They are overtaken by an increase of residues of the first class They devote themselves to higher pleasures of civilisation and art However they are less

capable of the forceful action required by the social order The aristocracy becomes victim of its own moderation and is swept away by a revolt and replaced by a violent elite

3. No lasting harmony : According to Pareto there cannot be any lasting harmony between the natural endowments of individuals and the social positions they occupy The laws of heredity are such that it is never certain that the sons of elite will be qualified There may be individuals who do not deserve to be called elite but belong to masses Therefore, such elites circulate.

According to Pareto if the elite faces a certain group in the masses which qualifies as elite, it uses two methods to meet it. Either it eliminates or absorbs them Absorption is obviously the more humane method Elimination requires different methods such as execution etc. When the elite has been in power for a long time, it becomes too intellectual and therefore vulnerable Such an elite is substituted by more qualified elite According to Pareto, the western societies had been generally governed by plutocratic elites or the family of foxes But a new kind of elite is emerging Pareto called the Fascist and Communist elites the elite of the family of lions who seize power in decadent societies

Emile Durkheim's Theory

According to Durkheim, division of labour is not to be regarded as a mere luxury, desirable perhaps, but not indispensable to society It is rather a condition of its very existence It is that assures the solidarity of the groups It determines the essential traits of their constitution It follows that, if such is really the function of the division of labour, it may be expected to have a moral character, because the needs of order, of harmony, of social solidarity generally are what one understands by moral needs

Social life is derived from a double source, (a) from a similarity of minds (b) from the division of labour The individual is socialised in the first case because, not having his own individuality, he is confused along with his fellows, in the bosom of the same collectivity In this case, because, even though he possesses a physiognomy and a temperament which distinguishes him from others, he is dependent upon these in the same measure in which he is distinguished from the society which results from the union of the two

The division of labour gives birth to regulations and laws which determine the nature and relations of the divided functions,

but the violation of which entails only punitive measure and not of an explanatory character. Every function which one individual exercises is invariably dependent upon functions exercised by others and forms with them a system of interdependent parts.

It follows that corresponding duties result from the nature of the task he chooses Because one fills this or that domestic or special function, one is imprisoned in a net of obligations from which one does not have the right to free himself. There is especially one organ forward which our state of dependence is every day increasing. It is the state. The points at which we are in contact within it are multiplying So are the occasions in which it takes upon itself to recall us to a sense of common solidarity. Collectivism and individualism, the great currents in social life based on the like-mindedness and independent characteristics of unique attributes of the person, are not too different in structure The segmentary structure of the society is more and more overlaid by the other, but without ever disappearing completely.

Durkheim rejects the economic definition of division of labour as rational device contrived by men to increase the output of the collectivity. As Francis Abraham and John Henry Morgan put it, "To Durkheim social differentiation begins with the disintegration of mechanical solidarity and of segmental structure Occupational specialization and multiplication of industrial activities are only an expression of a more general form of social differentiation which corresponds to the structure of society as a whole " Durkheim rejects the thesis of contractualists like Herbert Spencer, since the individuals, according to Durkheim were not free to enter into contracts with each other It is wrong to assume that individuals were aware of their differences before social differentiation. In fact, contractualism is the result not the cause of differentiation Division of labour is also not due to hedonistic causes since men in primitive societies were no less happy than those in modern societies Thus, according to Durkheim division of labour is a social phenomenon As he puts it, "The division of labour varies in direct ratio with the volume and density of societies and, if it progresses in a continuous manner in the course of social development, it is because societies become regularly denser and generally more voluminous "

Societies with mechanical solidarity are segmental. "In Durkheim's terminology, a segment designates a social group into which individuals are tightly incorporated But a segment is also a group locally situated, relatively isolated from others, which leads

its own life The segment is characterized by a mechanical solidarity, a solidarity of resemblance, but it is also characterized by separation from the outside world The segment is self-sufficient, it has little communication with what is outside By definition so to speak segmental organization is contradictory to those general phenomena of differentiation designated by the term organic solidarity " Thus differentiation, according to Durkheim, is not economic but social In his study of division of labour, he discovered two essential ideas Firstly, the societies with individuals having *consciousness entirely external to itself, were first in historical* process Secondly, individual phenomena should be explained by collectivity and not vice-versa The division of labour is a structure of the society as a whole of which economic division of labour is mere expression It must be studied objectively According to Durkheim the symptoms or expressions of collective consciousness are in legal phenomena, while the mechanical solidarity is expressed in repressive law In organic solidarity, however, punishments are more reformative As **Raymond Aron** points out, "We have here, I think, the outline of what is to be one of Durkheim's central ideas throughout his career the ideas with which he defines sociology namely, the priority of the whole over the parts, or again, the irreducibility of the social entity to the sum of its elements, the explanation of the elements by the entity and not of the entity by the elements " The societies advance with the growth of volume in territory and population This increases social density, greater communication and interaction The struggle of survival becomes more acute and it is solved through social differentiation Social differentiation diminishes chances of conflict It makes competition less severe since different persons seek different things such as while the soldier seeks military glory, the businessman seeks riches, whereas the scholar pursues knowledge, the priests seek moral authority Therefore, there is no conflict between men following different professions such as teaching politics, engineering etc As Raymond Aron puts it, "Social differentiation, a phenomenon characteristic of modern societies, is the formative condition of individual liberty Only in a society where the collective consciousness has lost part of its overpowering rigidity can the individual enjoy a certain autonomy of judgment and action In this individualistic society, the major problem is to maintain that minimum of collective consciousness without which organic solidarity would lead to social disintegration

Max Weber's Theory

Max weber has given his own unique analysis of the concept of 'social Organization' He discusses the concept of social organization along with the concept of social class He regards economic factor important in social organization but he does not regard the economic factor exclusive. He considers other social factors as also relevant These cannot be disregarded.

Explaining the concept of social organization, Weber tries first of all to make clear the concept of 'power' The power, he says, is that situation of individual or individuals in which they can experience and apprehend their goals and easily achieve them. In other words, power is the capacity to achieve one's objective with care On the other hand, a man who has no power cannot achieve his objective smoothly and easily Thus, power is a means to accomplish the desired ends After making the meaning of power clear, Weber tries to explain the types of power. The power is of two types First type of power can be called 'economic power' and the other type is called 'general power' The power has relevance to status The social status is both a amens and an end of power. The distribution of social status determines the social organization The hierarchy of status is vital in social organization. The social organization can be of three types .

1 Economic Organization

2 Social Organization

3 Legal Organization

The social organization gives birth to social class Thus, persons having similar status form one social class According to Weber, the most crucial factor in social stratification is economic The persons belonging to one class share, more or less, similar opportunities Thus a class of salaried professionals will be constituted by persons having, more or less, same amount of salaries the economic power also belongs to persons who are already well off and have control over means of production and distribution On the other hand, persons having no economic power belong to one class Only those persons belong to a particular class who are of more or less, similar status and, indeed, a class does not let persons of unequal opportunities become its member. Thus, economic factor plays an important role in social stratification.

According to Collins and Machowsky, Weber's concept of stratification is essentially "a theory of group formation, a set of

hypotheses about the conditions that bring men together into solidarity groups These conditions are found in the way men relate to the institutional orders that link groups together into a society " Fundamentally, Weber agreed with Karl Marx, in defining class The class is distinguished by the following three characteristics

1. Individuals share a particular casual facet of life
2. These facets are representated by economic drive, in the possession of goods and opportunities for accumulation of property
3. Class situation is essentially a marked situation

Thus class is a status group The highest prestige in society does not always belong to the richest class The status groups are distinguished on the basis of status symbols such as special attire, exclusive clubs and unique life styles Classes are stratified according to their relations to the production and acquisition of goods, Status groups are stratified according to the principles of their consumption of goods The classes are within the economic order while the status groups belong to the social order Thus, Weber rejected the unlinear class theory of Karl Marx. This helped in the movement from class to authority

P. A. Sorokin's Theory

In his analysis of structural and dynamic sociology Pitrim A. Sorokin discusses the concept of stratification as an inherent element in social systems According to Sorokin stratification is inevitable in a social system because of the needs of the social system itself, because of physical and mental characteristics of human beings, and because of environmental factors Sorokin discusses stratification in both its structural and dynamic aspects The structural aspect has been discussed as follows

Sorokin distinguishes between two types of differentiation, one of which is that which merely notes individual difference and rank, and the other which evaluates the differences so noted. He further distinguishes this from stratification which acknowledges that a group of individuals is similarly differentiated and that these differentiations are similarly evaluated For Sorokin there are real and quasi-real stratification To quote him, "The organized real strata usually are defined by the official law of the group, like the ranks of the Pope Cardinal-Archbishop-Bishop-hierarchy in the Church groups, like the full-associate-assistant professor-instructor-grading in the university, and so on for other groups"

Again, the "as if real and organised stratum" is made up of all those "individuals possessing the same position, rights, duties, functions etc in the hierarchy of strata, and who therefore think, feel and act similarly, so far as such similarity is imposed on them by the similarity of their stratum positions." However, since they are not organised they may not even be aware of their co belonging to the same stratum.

For Sorokin, "Social stratification means the differentiation of a given population into hierarchy superposed classes It is manifested in the existence of upper and lower layers Its axis and very essence consists in an unequal distribution of rights and privileges, duties and responsibilities, social values and privations, social power and influences among the members of a society." The stratification has been classified into three strata   economic, political and occupational The three strata are represented by wealth, power and authority and employment respectively There are two dimensions of stratification, real and quasi-real The strata are defined by the official law of the group as in the case of the Pope-Cardinal-Bishop hierarchy in the church or the Full Professor-Associate Professor-Assistant Professor ranking in the university

Stratification involves class system The specific characteristics of a social class, according to Sorokin "is the coalescence of occupation and economic bonds plus the bond of belonging to the same basic stratum and duties, or by its privileges and disfranchisements as compared with those of other classes In this sense the social class differs fundamentally from all other groups " Further elaborating the characteristics of a social class Sorokin wrote, "It is (1) legally open, but actually semiclosed, (2) 'normal', (3) solidary, (4) antagonistic to certain other groups (social classes) of the same general nature   (5) partly organized but mainly quasi organized, (6) partly aware of its own unity and existence and partly not, (7) characteristics of the western society of the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries, (8) a multibonded group bound together by two unibonded ties, occupational and economic   and by one bound of social stratification in the sense of the totality of its essential rights and duties "

Stratification and Mobility

Social stratification and social mobility are closely related to each other   We discussed earlier that in closed social stratification social mobility is limited to a great extent, while open

stratification provides ample opportunities for social mobility Social stratification and social mobility depend mainly upon the value system of a given society

Types of Mobility

Generally we find two types of social mobility, namely horizontal or spatial and vertical In spatial mobility the individual moves from his status to slightly higher status An individual's social status changes marginally by change in occupation, however, such changes do not affect vertical order of society In vertical mobility an individual's position changes from lower to higher status In some cases there is also sliding down of status After the French revolution social status of the king and feudal lords deteriorated in France Social status of princes Jagirdars and Zamindars has gone down after the abolition of Zamindari and privy purses When a lecturer is promoted to the status of reader or a reader is promoted, it is mobility Thus, social mobility means moving from one status to another Almost all societies provide avenues for mobility to some extent However availability of such opportunities in a particular society can be understood on the base of the social mobility The rate of mobility may be measured by the proportion of individuals who have achieved higher or lower status compared to their forefathers It can be determined by the rate of mobility and average social distance Some individuals move just one class up or down while others jump two or more classes in either direction We will discuss these in detail

1. Horizontal—This is the social mobility involving the transition of an individual or social object from done group to another which occupies the same level

2. Vertical—This is the movement of an individual or social object from one social stratum to another Avast amount of data are examined by Sorokin To discover general propositions about stratification which dare as follow

1 There has scarcely been any society whose strata were3 absolutely closed, or in which vertical mobility was not present in its forms—economic, political and occupational

2 There has never existed a society in which vertical social mobility has been absolutely free and the transition from one stratum to another has had no resistance

3 The intensiveness, as well as the generality of the vertical social mobility, varies from society to society

4 The intensiveness and the generality of the vertical mobility, the economic, the political and the occupational, fluctuate in the same society at different times

5 In the field of vertical mobility, in its three fundamental forms there seems to be no definite perpetual trend towards either an increase or a decrease of the intensiveness of generality or mobility

Vertical mobility, characteristic of the most popular open class system, according to Sorokin, occurs in two forms As he puts it, "The case of individual infiltration into an existing higher stratum or of individuals dropping from a higher social layer into a lower one are relatively common and comprehensible They need no explanation The second form of social ascending and descending, the rise and fall of groups, must be considered more carefully." Thus, vertical mobility occurs by the penetration of the individuals of a lower stratum into an existing higher one Again, it also happens by the descent of individuals from a higher stratum to a lower one Both these types of mobilities are equally important. Sorokin tried to identify the media of vertical mobility He analysed mechanism of social selection and the distribution of persons in different social strata He also analysed the "channels, elevators," or "holes" which permit individuals to move up and down or from one stratum to another In the history of mankind, according to Sorokin, the family, army, church, school, political, economic and professional organisations have been the chief channels which permit individuals to move up and down the social ladder from stratum to stratum These same channels are also the "sieves" which test and sift, select and and distribute the individuals within different social strata or a positions, Some of these, such as school and family, have the function of testing for the general qualities of the person, such as intelligence, health and social characteristics Some others, such as occupational organisations, test for the specific qualities of individuals necessary for successful performance of various functions in the society Sorokin stressed the importance of family as services through rigid rules on social intercourse between the different strata or groups An existensive amount of horizontal mobility has also been exhibited in western society, An increasing territorial circulation of individuals related of course to improved means of transportation contribute to this kind of mobility

Sorokin examined some of the effects of mobility on social systems, Among the positive attributes are "behaviour becomes

more plastic and versatile", "increase of mobility tends to reduce narrow-mindedness and occupational and other ideosyncracies " "Mobility, under some conditions, facilitates a better and more adequate social distribution than in an immobile society " More negative statements are "Mobility tends to increase mental strain " "Mobility diminishes intimacy and increases psychosocial isolation and loneliness of individuals " Societies differ greatly in the amount of mobility that prevails Some are characterised by a great deal of mobility attempts to up-grade one's rank are encouraged In others, where there is less mobility, attempts to change one's rank may be penalised

Factors of Social Mobility

What are the factors that encourage social mobility ? Certain activities, organisations and social structures quicken mobility while other factors slacken this process Because of difference in social formations and historical conditions the factors of mobility may differ in different societies Because of the caste system and determination of status by birth, the rate6e and quantity of vertical mobility have remained low in India The spread of education, industrialization, legislation and democratization have resulted into more or less equal opportunities for people in India It has given impetus to social mobility In the United States of America also primary, college and university education and competition are the most important factors of social mobility Prior to French revolution securing a noble groom for one's daughter by heavy dowry, money and church were some of the means by which one could move upward4d in French society

Factors obstructing Social Mobility

In spite of ideological differences all societies have certain factors which encourage mobility while some other factors hinder it Social mobility is concerned with values, beliefs, ideologies and social structure Closed societies, because of their structure and ideology, obstruct mobility Caste system permitted occupational mobility to some extent but change of caste was almost impossible Traditions, conventions, family relationships, state and social norms connected with caste have obstructed mobility American sociologists, Lipset and Bendix, have conducted as study of social mobility with special reference to the industrial system in the United States of America According to this study poverty, lack of education, lack of personal contact, incapacity to exploit fully available opportunities are some of the characteristics of the working classes This has transmitted from generation to

generation to generation These factors create a situation of lack
of facilities in society. This situation is the main obstacle in social
mobility Lipset and Bendix have found this in the American context
but these factors are generally obstacles in social mobility in other
societies as well

Factors Conducive to Social Mobility

It is generally believed that open stratification, equal
opportunities and competition encourage social mobility. Ideally
speaking caste is a closed system of social stratification, and as
such it is felt that social mobility is lacking in it.

The following are the structural factors that bring about
social mobility

　　1 Openness

　　2 Equal opportunities

　　3 Competitive ideology

　　4. Educational opportunity.

The following factors concerned with individual's efforts also
social mobility

　　1 Merit

　　2 Technical know-how

　　3 Aspirations for achievement

　　4 Skills

Almost all societies show an increase in the rate and quantity
of social mobility owing to the facts of urbanisation, industrializa-
tion, democratization and competitive ideology Many scholars also
take into account place of birth such as village or town, parent's
occupations, education, size of family ad age marriage while
considering social mobility

Emerging Trend of Stratification

It must be remembered that these characteristics of caste
are only descriptive. If we empirically consider two main
characteristics of caste namely, commensuality and connubiality it
would be obvious that these show flexibility and variety both from
the view point of scriptural precept and practice. It is generally
believed that Brahmins of Bengal,Assam, Orissa, Mithila and the
hilly regions of the Himalayas are4 non-vegetarian. Scriptures also
allowed the male Brahmins to marry women from other three
varnas

The question of social mobility in the caste system also need
to be considered properly. The question of social mobility din the

context of caste can be considered from two viewpoints Was it possible to change the social status based on birth by means of an individual's effort, merit and achievement ?

Social status of Brahmins and those who are today called scheduled castes (in the constitutional terminology), was strictly determined by birth. But the castes associated with the two middle varnas, namely Kshatriya and Vaishya witnessed social change If we consider the social status of the royal families of the ancient, medieval and modern India, we find that many of these were not Kshatriyas On the basis of their capacity and power many tribes and castes at the middle level succeeded in achieving the social status of the Kshatriyas They not only grabbed political power but also succeeded in establishing marital relationships with Kshatriya dynasties

So far as choice of occupations and performance of allied roles are concerned, with the exception of priesthood and skinning dead animals, and untouchables, other occupations show considerable flexibility Agriculture was open to all Very few Brahmins were engaged in studies, teaching sand priesthood as main profession They are engaged in cultivation throughout the country

All these facts must be kept in view while considering interconnections between caste, open and closed stratification and social mobility In this sense caste is generally an example of closed stratification because it gives too much importance to birth in determining social status There was little scope for competition in the caste system for achieving higher social status

Recent studies show that caste system witnesses change owing to various factors These factors are spread of education, opportunities of entering new professions, participation in political areas, democratic value, decentralization of power and social legislation Untouchability is a crime under law Indian constitution has made special provisions for the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes Seats are reserved for them in Parliament and legislative assemblies All these efforts have considerably improved the status of the backward castes Due to spread of education and policy of protective discrimination, an urban middle-class is emerging among the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes which is alive to its rights Adult franchise has granted to the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes the power to exercise their political rights All these factors are affecting the emerging social formation and system of stratification

New occupations and professions, legislation, industrialisation, urbanization, trade and commerce, modern education, and programmes of rural development have brought about vast changes in the caste system and social stratification. These changes have affected the balance of power in the rural areas, and this has benefited particular backward castes. At the same time it is also true that because of liturgy, caste is still influential in the countryside and it has contributed to the perpetuation of the caste system. So far as sanction connected with food and Untouchability are concerned, caste has become weak to a great extent, particularly after independence There has also been a liberal attitude towards inter-caste marriages

4

FAMILY IN INDIA

CHARACTERISTICS, CONTINUITY & CHANGE IN IT'S STRUCTURE

THE FAMILY is the basic unit of society It represent's both an institution as well as an association Family in the oldest amongst the other institutions. Also family still forms the backbone of our social structure Man is born in the family. It is in the family that he learns language, the behavioural patterns and social norms in his childhood. In some way or the other the family is a universal group It exists in tribal, rural and urban communities and among the followers of all religions and cultures

In spite of the universal nature of the family one can see vast differences in its structure in different societies In tribal and agrarian societies people of several generations live together These societies have large and joint families In the industrial society the family is limited to husband, wife and their children Sociologists call it a 'nuclear family' The family is formed with a number of members These members live together They have a home They have definite purposes in living together In this sense the family is a group There is certain rules and procedures at the root of the family In this sense the family is an institution

Why Family ?

The fact that man is a member of abiological species implies that there are certain deterministic conditions imposed upon his life Human nature has been defined as the inevitability of having to breathe, eat and drink, sleep, procreate and eliminate waste matter from inside the human body Whereas some of these functions, the first and (to some extent) the last, can be performed individually, the others cannot be so performed, but only when men organize themselves into a cooperative group Speaking from the point of view of physical endowments, man is not well-equipped with the same However, he has the gift of a highly developed brain which enables him to engage in organized behaviour to exploit and harness nature The groupings that come thus into existence may have for their immediate cause and binding force several principles of integration, the simplest and most obvious of these is the principle of kinship, that is, relationship between different members of a family based onmarriage and on descent. The relationship of a three-fold nature that between husband and wife, that between parents and children, and that between siblings (children of the sameparents) The second and the third relationship need not necessarly be blood-ties as childrenare often adopted The implicationis that family is notto bedefined solely with reference to man's biological nature

Origins of The Family

Much Sociological and anthropological research and speculation has gone into examining the historical origins of the family It seems that the student of social sciences these days is not much interested in the question of origins, but the earlier stage of the modern phase of anthropological studies was highly historical-minded, being dominated by the evolutionary doctrines of Darwin and Spencer Evolution was conceived of as a simple process of unilinear development, and the beginnings of social institutions were often presumed to be the reverse of the contemporary West European forms of these institutions, even though there was no sanction of a fully established biological analogy for such an attitude.

Basing himself on such evidence as licence on festive occasions, exchange of wives, lending of wives, and the use of the same kinship therm, like father, for several individuals, Lewis Morgan came to the conclusion that the family was unknown among the simplest and the rudest of peoples His picture of primitive society was one of atomistic existence, the only form of groupings existent being sibs He further held that due to free sex relations and ignorance of the role of paternity, fathers were unimportant, andmother- sibs were the earliest groupings.

Morgn's evolutionary scheme has nomore than an historical interest now. It has already been indicated above that the family, as an association, permits for so much variation of form that the unwary or a biased student may fail to see it. Morgan's premises were correct, but by no means universal Besides, his deductions are more logical and academic than actual and historical. Morgan has postulated a sequential growth of the institution of the family Since his time it has been stressed often that in view of the accepted fact of diffusion, such rigidly sequential and unilinear evolution of institutions is not an acceptable proposition.

Morgan listed five different and successive forms of family, each being associated with a corresponding and distinctive type of marriage. They were, in succcession, as follows

    1. The *consanguine* family, consisted of a group which was founded upon t the intermarriage, in a group, of siblings, own and collateral, 1 e , of brothers and sisters and of cousins.

    2. The *Punaluan* family was founded upon the intermarriage of several sisters, own and collateral, with each

other's husbands in a group The joint husbands were not necessarily related to oeach other Such a family was also founded upon the intermarriage of several brothers, own and collateral, with each other's wives, in a group, these wives not being necessarily related to each other. However, in actual practice, the husbands as a group, and the wives as a group, must have been kin of each other In each case, one group was conjointly married to another such group of members of the opposite sex

3. The *Syndyasmian* or pairing family was founded upon marriage between single pairs, without giving the right of exclusive cohabitation to any person over another Consequently such a marriage continued during the pleasure of the parties

4. The *patriarchal* **family** was founded upon the marriage of one man with several wives, each wife being secluded from every other.

5. The *monogamian* **family** was founded upon marriage between single pairs, with the married couple having exclusive co-habitation with one another.

Alongside of this classification, **Lewis Morgan** posited different systems of consanguinity in ancient and modern societies

The first significant denial of Morgn's scheme, and its basis particularly, came from Westermarck He, on the basis of a detailed study of the institution of marriage, concluded that the family was the out come of malepossessiveness and jealosy, and a growth in property and of the sense of property So, man, and not woman, becomes the central figure in the scheme of development here However, it is also true that Morgan also dated the origin of the family only after man's role in begetting children became known, and the right ofpassing property to his own, rather than to his sister's or mother's children, had been recognized and accepted

Westermarck's scheme was alsocharacterized by the evolutionaryattitude to the growthofinstitutions, andhecarriedit to extreme limits. He traced monogamy back to mammals and birds, and opined that man had inherited it from the earlier stages of *the ladder of evolution Any further evolution which had taken* place was essentially in the moral ideas evolved by man with regard to marriage and not in the institution itself The rigidity of these views strikes at their own roots

Briffault went back to Morganian inspiration and rejected Westermarck's views as unacceptable He roots the institution of the family in yet another institution, viz the **mother-right,** that

is, the supreme authority of the mothers. The patriarchal and monogamian families are regarded by him as later in point of time and development.

Modern students of the subject have not concerned themselves with this tricky problem of origins, not because the failures of the earlier writers discouraged them, nor because the historical approach has been completely displaced, but because of what has been regarded by some as its relative futility and uselessness. Data collected by conscientious investigators from all parts of the globe, and at all levels of culture, have borne evidence to the existence of the family. Prehistoric reconstructions have not yielded any positive evidence of importance to the contary as yet. The classical anthropologists made much of the primitiveness of the Australian aborigines, but it is fully accepted now that the Andaman Islanders are even more primitive, and these as well as the Australian aborigines do have the family as a vital and socially significant grouping. Within the subcontinent of India, the most backward, materially and socially, of tribes like the Kadar, the Paniyan, the Malapantaram, the Chenchu, the Birhor and so on do have the familial organization. Sibs, which were assigned by Morgan to the crudest level, have been found to have developed among tribes which live on some kind of agriculture. The rudest of primitive tribes like the Andaman Islanders and the Kadar do not have sibs, whereas among more developed tribes, like the Toda and the Khasi, sibs represent an elaborate organization.

The family is based on simple and obvious facts. It involves the recognition of just those who are closely related to one's self through constant physical conotiguity, physical cooperation, emotional bonds, and blood ties. It does not involve complicated differentiation or selection as, for instance, the sib does. In view of the basic deterministic drives, the satisfaction of which only a grouping like the family makes possible and must have in the past made possible, the conclusion is apparent, viz. that the family must have been always existent, coeval with human culture. It is, however, quite understandable that it must have developed in varying contexts and, therefore, acquired varied forms. The sex and hunger urges, the economic compulsives, and the cultural traditions have everywhere provided the theoretical justification for the recognition of the existence of the family. As soon as there is some permanency in sex relations and copperative economic endeavour, a family comes automatically into existence. The brith of offspring cements and integrates family life. It can, however

never be overemphasized that although the family is our response to the challenges of our bio-psychical, natural and environmental setting, yet it is universally conditioned by the local cultural traditions. And it is this fact of varying cultural conditioning that seems to have deceived the earlier students of this institution What is more, even if there may be a single pattern of familial organisation in a society, in practice several variant forms may emerge This is why several types of familial groupings are found within the same social-cultural milieu

Meaning & Definition of Family

A number of sociologists and social scientists have defined the family in a number of ways Maciver & page writes in their famouos writing 'society' that the family is a definite and long-term group defined by sexual relationships that reproduce and bring up children It may include other blood-relations also but it is mainly formed by lilving together of man, woman and their children The unit formed by their living together is called family **Ogburn and Nimkoff** is in view that the family is an association formed by the sex relations of husband and wife with or without children They believe that husband and wife or only the woman and her children or only the man and his children by living together can form a family But the family is not limited to these individuals alone. It size can be large also People of many generations and relatives can also live together in a family. The unit that is thus formed is called 'dynasty' by Ogburn and Nimkoff They distinguished between 'family' and 'dynasty'

These definitions reveal certain elements of family which are as follows

1 The family is a basic, definite and enduring group

2 Family is formed by the relatively durable companmanship of husband, wife and their sex relationships

3 The family includes the coluples and thier children The family procreates and brings up children

4 The family can also be large in size in which persons belonging to several generations my live together.

5 The family may be limited to husband, wife or only the father and his children or only the mother and her children

6 When many generations live together it is called joint family

Blesenz and Biesenz held "The family in one sense may be defined as a woman with a child and a man to look after them".

Elliot and Merill writes that "The family may be defined as the biological, social unit composed of husband, wife and children. The family may also be considered, as a social institution, a socially approved organization for meeting definite human needs"

The Family as a Functional Unit

From the composition of and the principles of integration underlying the family, it is obvious that it is a functional unit. It grows out of biological needs, particularly those of the expectant mother and the infant child, who cannot support and live by themselves Another contributory cause is the need for the exploitation of environment which is essential to permit the satisfaction of the more intimate biological needs; and this can not take place without organized co-activity

For a healthy and satisfactory living man seeks a secure satisfaction of his biological drives By cooperating with other members of his family, and dividing work with them, he is able to satisfy his own basic need for food, and also make some contribution tothe similar satisfaction of those other members who are cooperating with him Thus, when a member of the Kadar tribe, of Cochin, joins his family members in the search for edible fruits and roots, he helps in the satisfaction of the hunger of the group as a whole of which eh is a member The same cooperation obtains, and for the same reasons, when he joins in other economic activities Thus, we find that the family as an economic unit has a personal and a collective aspect. It provides for the ersonal satisfaction of the individual Collectively it does the same for the family, and besides, provides the unit for the total economic pattern of the tribe or the nation Thus, a Kadar family, as a group, provides food for its members and also becomes a unit of the Kadar food-gathering economy

Similarly, when we look upon the family as the means of regular and channelized sex-satisfaction, the two-fold aspect is again visible. By providing for mating, the family as an institution (that is, as a mode of rendering service) makes it possible for the individual's sex urge to be satisfied But this primary satisfaction often leads to a fuller, though slightly impersonal satisfaction; cohabitation leads to conception and children are born, not only satisfying the psychic instincts of parental love and solicitude but also leading tothe socially very significant fact of the perpetuation of the group and the species

Every great association of people, it may be a state, a nation, or a tribe, has its own distinctive culture, its modes of living and thought, which are developed as a response to thepeculiar circumstances of the environment, natural and, alongside of it, ideological The family is the agency through which theimpressionable rising generation is made familiar with such traditions Thepurpose is, oonce again, two fold By teaching the individual what situations to anticipate, how to behave and what behaviouor to expect, by giving him the gifts of language and dress which integrate him within his cultural ethos, the family provides a personal satisfaction, it facilitates adjustment to people and groups outside the family circle

Even if a society does not impart the lessons mentioned above in any organized manner, still the pattern which its family life exhibits inculcates certain kinds of behaviour responses and thinking and feeling-patterns typical of the society and its culture Thus, transmission of the cultural traditions proceeds from generation to generation, and thereby takes place the preservation of the individual by his being spared various stresses and strains of adjustment, and also of the culture by its transmission to the next generation being ensured and its extinction precluded

The family thus acts simultaneously as an educative unit and a socio- cultural agency The importance of this aspect of the family lies in the fact that whereas all children everywhere get their earliest instruction in the family,instruction in such *elementary, but supremely important,* things as language for instance, in the case of most of the world's children, the rest of the education also takes place within the family, and not in any other institutional setting Thus, all over tribal India, barring tribes like the Naga and certain Middle Indian tribes like the Munda, the Oraon, and the majority of the Gond, who have the dormitory institution, which might be regarded as an institution for imparting education, no deliberately initiated institution for such purposes is found to exist under tribal ways of living

The Family as an Association

There are two ways of looking at the family It can be regarded and studied as one of the universal and permanent institutions of mankind, that is, as a functional unit, and it is as such that it has been examined above There is yete another *way* of studying the family, that of regardingit as a group, or a

deliberately formed association. Such an approach would study the form and the content of the family, i.e., its character and composition, as also its variations from time to time and place to place

It has been pointed oujt already that the family hasa biological matrix; itis the expectant mother and the infant who require familiar protection most. However, itis never the mother and the infants alone who constitute a family; there are always thhe mother's mate and their children, who complete the initial membership This basic groupingof themates and their children, has been called by such variousnames as the *nuclear*, the *immediate* or the *primary family*. The implication of all these terms is, however, the same, viz. that the nucleusof all types of families consists of those individuals who are bound together by a procreative urge and grouped with theirchildren intoaprotective-cum-productive association

If thus nucleus is extended, as it very often is, by the addition of other closely realted kin, then it is called an *extended family*. Extended families are of various types Firstly, there are those which grow mainly round the nucleus, and secondly there are those which are extended still further, by extending the principle of kinship, like in the Hindu *joint family*.

The Family as a Process

The family has been viewed, not only as a permanent functional institution and an ever-active affective association, but also as a process The process called the family can be divided into three or four well-defined stages on the basis of data available to us in India. In the first instance, we have the *formative* stage, when the individual as a growing child is prepared for his adulthood roles as a responsible member of society Then follows the *nuptial* stage among most of the rural and urban groups, particularly in the former, child marriage having been a very distinctive feature of the Indian rural social struucture. Tribal socieites in India correspond to modern Western society in having a *pre-nuptial* stage after the formative and before the nuptial stages. This pre-nuptial stage among the Middle-Indian and some Naga tribes is spent in mono-or bio-sexual dormitories and in taking training in all the ctivities of adulthood, including those pertaining to sex. During this stage, it has been found, among the Muria Gond and the Konyak Naga for instance, that liaisons develop and

attachments are formed which are consummated after the ceremonial function of marriage has taken place. Among the rural and urban sections of the people, where marriages are parent-arranged and no courtship takes place, no such pre-nuptial stage exists

After marriage come the children, i.e , the *post-nuptial* stage Speaking from the point of view of society at large, this stage is the most significant. As the growing generation of children come of age, they set the same process going again Thus, the family is an ever-continuing process, on the smooth continuity of which depends the continuity of society itself

We are now in a position to make a list of the broad characteristics of the family

Distinctive Features of The Family

The family is, in the first instance, characterized by some form of institutionalized mating, i.e , some type of marriage. Secondly, there is some mode of reckoning descent by having a nomenclature Thirdly, a family is an economic unit, particularly so far as the mother and the infant are concerned. Finally, a family is always associated with a common habitation for all its members

The family, a grouping as outlined above, has the following distinctive features, as listed, and elaborated, by MacIver

1. Universality—In view of the faact that all the aspects of an individual's life, ranging from deterministic biological to deterministic cultural, and considerably influenced and made possible by the family grouping, family is found all over the world and at all levels of culture Besides, there is no conclusive or convincing evidence that there ever was a time when the family did not exist Modern civilization has not so far succeeded in providing a complete and fully satisfying substitute for this grouping The scope for compositional variation has in the past often clouded the presence of the family in various so-called primitive societies, but its absence has never been proved

2. Emotional basis—The integrative bonds in a family are mutual affection and blood ties The cords that tie together the members of a family are the outcome of such an emotional factor as love, and not an intellectual factor like reason This emotional basis of the family makes it ideally suited to perform the all-important role of early education, which makes it an institution of considerable importance as a transmitter of culture.

· .,. **Educative role**—The most plastic years of every individual's life, that is, his childhood, are spent in his family. It is here that he gets the earliest and the most fundamental lessons in socialization He is mentally formed according to the norms of society, which get ingrained in him to re-appear in his adult life as conscience or super-ego The cultural traditions that are imbibed by a individual are imbibed by him in the familial setting, making the formative influence of the family supreme Speaking form a limited point of view, his family also exerts a formative influence on the biological growth of the individual by making available particular and defined types of basic satisfactions to meet the basic needs in such matters as metabolism, safety, growth and so on

4. Limited size—The family, throughout the world, is characterized by its precision as compared to other types of groupings, like the sib or clan for instance.

5. Nuclear position—With regard to all the different types of groupings, the family plays an important role in so far as it prepares the individual for participation in all these secondary groups, for their demands and situations It serves as the nucleus for the growth of other types of groupings which never deal with the cultureless creatures that a newly-born child is

6. Sense of responsibility among members—Even though emotions and feelings are the main basis of family life, it is not completely devoid of reason. A sense of responsibility among its members in relation to each other is an aspect which is more rational and reasoned than emotional and instinctive. This feeling of personal responsibility towards each other is very important to ensure the smooth working of the familial grouping, and, consequently, of society as a whole; and, therefore, we find society stepping in to ensure it through customs and mores

7. Social regulation—Society, that is the collectivity, keeping the collective and wider view in mind, has to ensure, by evolving mores and folkways, that the individual members in a family do perform all those functions towards each other on the basis of which the wider network of social relationships is dependent for its success. Thus, for example, there are social restrictions on divorce varying in intensity, in almost every society.

8. Persistence and change—Whereas the family as an institution is the most permanent and universal one in human societies, as na association it is subject to constant change in composition and structure, even within the same society. Time runs

parallel to the family considered as an institution, but gets intimately involved in it when it is looked at as an association

These definitions and characteristics of family show that on one hand it has a biological aspect in which man and woman become husbandand wife by certain institutional modes Sexual and affective relationships exist between them They procreate and bring up children On the other hand, it has a social aspect in which the family membershave responsibilities towards each other In a social-cultural sphere the family influences its members by the process of socialization. It also regulates the behaviour of its members

The family is generlly smaller in size scompared to other social groups, organisations and associations Hence it must be remembered that the size of the family in agrarian and tribal communities sometimes can belarge The nature of the family is universal because it exists in all socities As an institution the family's existence is enduring The nature of a particular fmily may be permanent or temporary

The family has passed through many stages to reach its modern form The family, marriage, economic system and succession are interrelated. Thestructure, behavioral patterns and functions ofthe family have been changing with hanges in the socio-economic order

Marx, Engles and Morgan hold that there was permissiveness in sexual relations in tribal societies and the institutions ofthe family and marriage did notexist in them They reached this conclusion because of sexual permissiveness and the practice of exchanging women on festive occasions in some tribal societies

Anthropological studiesof tribal socieites,and particularly Malinowski's researchshaveproved that even in the tribal socieites the institution of the family existed in some form or the other Primitive social and economic sytems, especially agrarian systems, require more of human labour Therefore, the size of the family in these societies is generally large Polygamy was also prevalent in these societies This was also a reason of the large size of the family

The industrial-urban system has reduced the size of the family. In this system the family generally means husband, wife and their children. There are ceretain social and economic factors behind this In a system which is based on labour and wages the

individual is responsible for his work The individual goes from the village to the city in search of employment On account of the constraints of limited wages and small accommodation, he is forced to follow the small family norm. In the modern urban industrial system the basis of marriage is love and personal liking This has also contributed towards the small size of the family in urban societies

Structure of The Family

The structure of the familiy can be understood on the basis of these characteristics. The structure of the familyis mainly basedon the husband- wife relationship. Another basis of the familial structure is procreation The third basis of this structureis a common residence These elements form a nuclear family. The structure of the family is also related to economic system. The present urban industrial system and the occupations have encouraged the structure of nuclear and individualistic family. In the tribal, agrarian and rural system of economy where family is still a unit of production, we generally find large and joint families apart from husband, wife and their procreations These families generally include father, mother, brothers, their wives, unmarried sisters and others The Indian joint family is the best example of this type. The family cannot be understood through cluster of members such as husband, wife, their children and relatives. These members develop affective relationship and perform their roles through social bvalues, customs and traditions' The structure of family possesses following features These elements along with means of livelihood constitute family as an enduring institution.

1. Nature of the family-nuclear, joint or extended
2. Family members and ancestors
3. Institution of marriage
4. Differentiation of the roles of the family members
5. Origin nd succession
6. Maintain distinct family identity
7. Property of family
8. Family occupation
9. Nomenclature
10. Residence
11. Customs, traditions, patterns
12. Authority

Functions of The Family

The family also fulfils a number of functions .

1. Sexual
2. Procreative
3. Economic
4. Education

According to Goode the family has the following functions :

1 Procreation
2 Socio-economic security to family members
3 Determination of status of family members
4. Socialization and emotional support
5 Social control

These functions of the family can be divided into four major aspects

1 Biological
2 Psychological
3 Social
4 Economic

We would like to discuss these in detail

(1) Biological function—In all societies, primitive or modern, simple or complex human sex-urge requires established and socially- recognized channels of satisfaction The relationship between husband and wife and the act of mating it involves, represents the most important biological function of family Procreation of the race is generally a consequence of the satisfaction of sex-urage, at least it is so from the viewpoint of the persons involved From pure sociological viewpoint, the procreation is of prime importance

(2) Psychological function—Cry is the only language of a child But then the environment and conditions within a family guarantee that the language of that cry be understood Long before a child can ccommunicate his feelings and thoughts to other members of the family via media of language, a child finds his relative relationship with each members of the family, although his assessments are based upon purely psychological reactions and are native Similarly, long before a child can step into the

matter-fact, world of give and take he learns the value of love, sympathy and devotion, and how to reciprocate them. These form the psychological core of future personality.

(3) **Social function**—One of the most important, in fact seccond importance to the biological function of the family, is social function Family, in primitive and simplere societies formed the basic unit of social organization. In a way society was more an aggregation of family organization athan an independent system. The position, however, is not the same in the case of relatively advanced socieities. Here family do not exactly represent the basic organisational unit of the society, but its role in the deteermination of the texture and stability of sociaal organization has not at all diminished. It would be more correct to say that with the growing influence of larger and more impersonal organizations in the affairs of man the need and the importance of the family, as the most human and personal association of mankind has considerably increased The other organization remark personnels of some clear-cut personality and of having some degree of basic qualification, before they are taken in as members. That is to say, that they do not want to take the full responsibility of nursing a person from his childhood and his disqualifications Only the family can claim, and be proud of its role of enrolling of new person during the most formative and delicate period of his or her life. This role, the family takes without any assurance of some guaranteed award

   Socialization of human personality nis anothere important function of family. The child's first human relationship are with the immediate members of his family. He learns first of all from those immediately in charge of him, hismother or nurse or his father or in some societies those who function in their instead There he learns first of all from those immediately in charge of him, hismother or nurse or his father or in some societies those who function in their instead There he experiences love, authority, direction, protection, setting of examples and ideals Every moment of his conscious life, adult conduct is acting opoen his consciousness according to the capacity he possesses to appreciate it meaning. It provides active stimuli to his nervous system He reacts to this conduct by actions at first purely instinctive but increasingly conscious and perhaps purposive Habits form according to the treatment theyh give him and according to the reaction determined by his inherited capacity. As he grows older imitation of parental actions and exposure to their suggestions lead him to form habits, which affect his social life more profoundly than he will recognize until many years after, if at all"

The family environment primarily consists of the prevalent customs, codes and traditions of the community It is at the same time made highly personal by the human interaction involved Due to former fact it can safely be said that a child first comes in contact with the mysteries of a community life as he sees it reflected in the mirror of family The seeds of mutual understanding are shown in his personality while he lives in the closed environment of family and when he grows up those seeds would germinate to flower into friendship, associations, and love, and enable the grown-up child to see the whole community as a great family of mankind

4. Economic function—Another important function of the family is economic In pre industrial tribal and agrarian societies, unit of production is the family All members of the family equally contribute to family occupation such as cultivation, crafts, cottage industries, cattlerearing and hunting The family provides economic security to its member and looks after their primary needs such as food, security, shelter, clothing and nurse them in unfavourable conditions

In family there is continuous exchanges between the biological and socio- cultural factors The family transforms the child, a mere animal, into a human being Man's biological and cultural aspects are complementary to each other but on the other hand we also find antagonism between these aspects Biological (sexual) desires are regulated by socio-cultural (marriage) factors It also happens sometimes that the socio-cultural factors cannot regulate the biological passions and as a result new problems emerge in society It must be kept in mind here that biological needs and passions alone cannot build the structure of the family

Types of Family

A number of Anthropologists & Sociologists have classified the family in a number of ways Dr D N Majumdar & T N Madan have given the few types of family They writes that "If a nucleus of blood relatives is surrounded by a fringe of spouses, the resultant grouping is called a **consanguineous family.** It consists of members related by birth, and individual choice does not operate Consequently, it is more stable Maturation of children or break up of the marriage bond dfoes c ot destroyo the conosanguineous family Owing to marriage between close relatives being universally ruled out, the consanguineous family can meet any demand of its

members except that for sexual gratification; and it is this fact
that necessitates the fringe of spouses. Thus, we find that the
emphasis is on the blood relationship and not the marriage bond.
The Nayar of Malabar are said to have had a family of this type
till the earlier years of this century. They did not grant any social
recognition at all to the husband, nor even to the father for that
matter

The type of family that we are more familiar within in our
own society, viz. that in which there is a nucleus of spouses and
their offspring surrounded by a fringe of relatives is called a
conjugal family, and is found among many tribes like, e g, the
Kharia. The emphasis here is on the conjugal bond and, therefore,
this type of family is not stable among such people who do not
hold this bond as indissoluble. Such a type of family also posits a
dynamics in family membership in so far as everybody changes
his/her allegiance to the family in which he/she was born when
he/she gets married. There may be, however, animmense difference
in the degree of this change. Thus, under conditions of patrilocal
existencce, the incoming wife would almost completely break away
from her family of birth, whereas the husband would not

The family in which one is born is called the **family of
origin or orientation**, and the family which one helps to set up
after one's marriage is called the **family of procreation**.

There can also be other types of extension to permit the
inclusion of all those people whom it may not be possible to include
in the primary family Thus, we have **polygynous families** where
a man marries more than one wife, a condition of marital
arrangements common all over tribalIndia Or, there are
polyandrous families in which the husbands are more than one,
as for instance among the Khasa of Jaunsar Bawar, U.P., where
several brothers marry one wife without any exclusive right of
cohabitation for any one spouse An interesting case would be the
combination of the above two principles of organization; and the
Toda have recently developed such a family, based on group
marriage

Next, there is the **joint family**, so very prevalent in India,
hedged in and sanctioned by tradition, history, pseudo-history,
myths and religion It is a collection of more than one primary
family, on the basis of close blood ties and common residence
Consequently, there can be two types, the **matrilocal joint family**
like that of the Nayar and the **patrilocal joint family** like that
of the tribes in Central India and all Hindus. In both these types

Sibs being as wide and extended as they are, actual recording is not possible, and often mythical ancestors are invented

When several sibs or clans combine to constitute a still wider grouping, it is called a phratry. If sibs are, however, subdivided into groups with known historical ancestors, they are called lineages. The Toda have their social life structured on the basis of sibs The tribe asa whole is divided into two phratries, Teivaliol and Tartharol Each of these two phratries is further sub-divided into father sibs. The family as a bilateral grouping is, however, present in both the Toda as well as the Khasi social structures, the latter being based on mother sibs. Thusthe primary and the extended families are not mutually exclusive

Similar to the sib is the gotra kin group as it is found among the Hindus all over India, and in a modified form, as a result of culture contact, among tribal people, like the Baiga for instance who call it *got*. In practice, a *gotra* consists of a large number of cognates supposed to be descended from the same *rishi*-ancestor, who lived in the ancient past. In course of time the number of descendeants of each' *rishi*-ancestor has increased so that not only have all ties of common residence and even territorial proximity been snapped, but a large number of new derivative *gotra* kin groups has sprung up named after new *rishis* It is not merely the cognatic relationship that determines the association into a gotra, but there are cases when the disciples of a *rishi* have adopted the *gotra* of their preceptor *Gotra* ccmes to have its socialsignificance in so far as the members of the same *gotra*, even if they have never known or heard of each other nor are related by blood, cannot intermarry So long as the *gotra* was regarded as a group of consanguineous kin, the question of marriage within the *gotra* did not arise But today we find that each *gotra* consists of a large number of culturally heterogeneous people, among whom there are no traces of historical links It has, therefore, become imperative to advocate a relaxing of *gotra* restrictions on marriage.

In the foregoing pages, the family has been viewed from the functional and the compositional points of view, leading up to a classification mainly from the compositional or structural point of view. However, the form and structure of a family is not determined only by the type and number of people who are its members, but also by how the spouses are, in the beginning, recruited Thus, families have been classified as monogamous, polygynous, polyandrous, and as based on group marriage, besides, of couorse,

as primary (or, single) and extended (or joint) from these various points of view From the point of view of authority, a family may be classified either as patripotestal, or matripotestal, or avuncupotestal. The mode of inheritance of family name and property, of reckoning of descent and succession to rank and office may lead to a two-fold classification of patrilineal and matrilineal families. Finally, a residential classification into patrilocal, matrilocal and avunculocal is also possible

Dr. K.L. Sharma have writely classified the family on the basis of following factors in his book "Indian Society"

1. Size
2. Residence
3. Ancestors
4. Power and authority
5. Marriage

Before considering these factors it can be accepted that there are other bases also for classifying the family On the basis of historical chronology it is classified as ancient, medieval and modern families On the basis of social ecology the family can be divided into rural and urban families On the basis of structure it is divided into primitive, agrarian and industrial families After these indications, we can examine in detail this typology

(1) Size—A three-fold typology can be discussed on the basis of size

1. Nuclear or individualistic families
2. Extended families
3. Joint families

In nuclear or individualistic family husband wife and their children live together

Modern industrial urban system has encouraged this type of the family Individualist ideology, economic and residential problem, law concerning property and the marriage system have strengthened the concept of nuclear families According to Murdock the nuclear family may be further divided into two parts

1. The family of orientation
2. The family of procreation

By the family of orientation, is meant the family in which the individual is born and in which his parents brothers and sisters reside After marriage the individual forms the family of

procreation In this family of procreation he lives with his wife and children

Generally extended families are found in tribal societies This type of families are alsofound in Japan which is industrially advanced Joint families are generally big in size Such family includes many families and people of many generations Agrarian economy, traditional-social organisations, rural communities and religion have played important role in preserving the joint family system in India The joint family system possesses the following features

1 At least three generations living together

2 Common ancestors

3 Common duties

4 Common residence

5 Common property

6 As far as possible a common kitchen

7 Head of the family and his authority over the family members and property

8 A traditional occupation

Industrialisation, urbanisation, occupational mobility, wage-based livelihood, moderen education, and individualistic ideology have been instrumental in diminishing the size, functions and importance of the joint family

The individuals who migrate from villages to cities to earn livelihood still have cultural values relating to joint family system The land and house of the joint family in the village remain undivided Individuals returning from the city to the village utilise them The members of a joint family participate in the celebrations of birth, marriage, death and the festivals Because of their occupation in the city they live alone or with their wives and children

These days a new tendency nis being seen among the nuclear families living in cities If the children are smlal and the wife is also engaged in economic activities, the couple seeks the help of either the husband's parents or the wife's parents The grand parents live incities to look after their grand children Thus the necessity of the joint family is again being felt in the urban system Another tendency is obviously the rise of nuclear families Majority of couples in cities, and gradually also in villages are preferring nuclear families to joint families

(2) Residence—Classification of patrilocal and matrilocal families is based on residence In patrilocal families the bride resides with the husband's family Majority of families in the world belong to this type In the matrilocal families the bridegroom resides, with the family of his wife This system is prevalent in the Khasi, Jayantia and Garo tribes of the Meghalaya State in India

(3) Ancestors—On the basis of ancestors the family is classfied into patrilineal and matrilineal families In the patrilineal families the ancestors are men while in the matrilineal families the ancestors are women Most of the families in the world belong to the patrilineal system In the patrilineal and matrilineal families lineage, succession, etc are determined on the basis of father and mother, respectively

(4) Power and authority—On the basis of power and authority families can be divided into patriarchal and matriarchal categories In the first type the father is the head of the family and the familial power and authority rests in the father In the second type of family the familial authority lies with the mother and she is the head of the family

(5) Marriage—Sociologists have divided family on the basis of marriage also Polygamy was prevalent in ancient and medieval societies The system of polyandry may be further divided into the systems of polyandry and polygamy In the system of polyandry a woman had more than one husband while in polygamy a man couldhave many wives at the same time Polyandry is prevalent in Himalayan tribes such as Kinni (Himachal Pradesh), Khas of Jaunsar Babar (Uttar Pradesh), Sherpa (Nepal) and Bhutiya (Bhutan) But polyandry is gradually diminishing

Joint Family

The Family of Hindu does not consist only of husband, wife and their children but also of uncles, aunts and cousin is and grandsons This system called joint family or extended family system is a peculiar characteristic of the Hindu social life A son after marriage does not usually separate himself from the parents but continues to stay on with them under the same roof messing together and holding property in common The family has a joint property and every person has his share in it since the time he is born The earnings of all the members are put in a common fund out of which family expenses are met Non-earning members have

as much share as the earning members The Indian family system is thus like a socialistic community in which everyone earns according to his capacity and receives according to his needs

Meaning and Definition of Joint Family

Various scholars have defined the concept of joint family in different ways

Irawati Kerve has written in kinship organization in India" that "A joint family is a group of people who generally live under one roof, who eat food cooked at one hearth, who hold property in common and who participate in common worship and are related to each other as some particular type of kindred"

According to *I P Desai*, "We call that household a joint family which has greater generation depth, than under family and the members of which are related to one another by property, income and the mutual rights and obligations"

According to *Kingsley Davis*, "The joint family consists of males having a common male ancestor, female offspring not yet married, and women brought into the group by marriage All of these persons might live in a common household or in several house-holds near to one another. In any case, so long as the joint family holds together, it members are expected to contribute to the support of the whole and to receive from it a share of the total product"

According to *Jolly*, "In a joint family not only parents and children, brothers and step brothers live on the common property, but it may sometimes include ascendants and collaterals upto many generations "

According to *Henry Maine*, "The Hindu joint family is a group constituted of known ancestors and adopted sons and relatives related to these sons through marriage"

Characteristics of Joint Family

On the basis of the above definitions the chief characteristics of joint family are the following

(i) **Large Size**—The first characteristic of the joint family is its large size A single family consists of only the husband, wife and their children. But a joint family consists of parents, children,

grand children and other near relatives along with their women It is a group in which several basic families live together at one and the same time

(ii) Joint Property—In a joint family, the ownership, production and consumption of wealth takes place on a joint basis It is a cooperative institution, similar to a joint stock company, in which there is joint property The head of the family is like a trustee who manages the property of the family is like a trustee who manages the property of the family for the material and spiritual welfare of the family members The total earnings of all the family members are pooled together

(iii) Common Residence—*The members of joint family usually live under the same roof* They may also live in separate houses in close proximity to one another They eat the same food and wear the same types of clothes.

(iv) Cooperative Organization—The basis of joint family system is cooperation A joint family consists of a large number of members and if they do not cooperate with one another it is not possible to maintain the organization and structure of the joint family

(v) Common Religion—Generally the members of a joint family believe in the same religion and worship similar deities They perform jointly the religious rites and duties They celebrate all the festivals and social functions jointly They are held themselves jointly accountable for participating in social ceremonies like marriage, death and other occasions of family sorrows and rejoicings They all share the family burden together

(vi) A Productive Unit—This feature of joint family is found among agricultural families All the members work at one and the same field They do the sowing and harvesting of the crops together Even in the case of artisan classes all the members of a joint family do one and the same function

(vii) Mutual Rights and Obligations—The rights and obligations of the members of joint family are the same None except the head of the family has special privileges Every member of the family has equal obligations If one female member works in the kitchen, the other does the laundry work, and the third one looks after the children There is rotation of duties as well

It may not, however, be presumed that joint family system originated in India This institution is said to be the outcome of the settling down of the Aryans in different parts of the world We

have similar institutions practically all over the world As we have learnt before in the ancient Roman society the supreme authority vested in the eldest male member of the family who, in administering the family affairs, was entitled to take all steps, when the pastoral stage was over and the people began to live a settled life by tilling the soil, constructing the house and maintaining the patrimony Joint family system came into existence Difficulties of communication and travel compelled all the members of the family to live together and carry on jointly the family occupation in agriculture or trade Over and above these causes the kinship idea and the religion emphasizing ancestor worship further made joint family a complex organization entering to the spiritual and economic needs of the large family groups which composed the society In other parts of the world while joint family system has disappeared, in India it still continues though suffering heavy strains brought about by industrialization and urbanization.

Merits of Joint Family System

The following are the chief merits of the joint family system ·

(i) **Ensures economic progress**—It enables economic progress of the country since every one in the family is guaranteed a bare subsistence, a first condition of economic progress. Unless people are assured of the food and shelter they would not devote themselves sincerely to the work of country's progress. It is an essential condition of national progress that the citizens must at least get two meals a day. Joint family provides this to its members and thus enables them to devote themselves to nation's progress

(ii) **Division of labour**—It secures the advantage s of the division of labour Every member in the family is given work according to his abilities without being taxed unduly Every phase of family's life is managed by all members including women and children Thus during the harvest season every member of the family helps in harvesting the crops No outside labour is required.

(iii) **Economy**—It secures economy of expenditure. Since things are consumed in large quantities they are secured at economic prices Within small means a large family can be maintained if it lives jointly.

(iv) **Opportunity for leisure**—It provides opportunities for leisure to the members The female members divide the household work and finish it within a little time spending the rest of it in leisure

(v) Social insurance—In the joint family the orphans find a comfortable asylum instead of being thrown out Similarly, widows are assured of their proper living for whom remarriage in India is unthinkable The joint family acts as a social insurance company for the old, sick and incapacitated

(vi) Social virtues—It fosters great virtues like sacrifice, affection, co-operation, spirit of selfless, broadmindedness among its members and makes the family a cradle of social virtues Under the care of elders the undesirable and anti-social tendencies of the young are checked and they are prevented from going astray All learn to exercise self-control All members learn to obey family rules and respect those elder to themselves

(vii) Avoids fragmentation of holdings—It avoids fragmentation of holdings and the evils inherent therein It prevent property from being divided

(viii) Socialism—According to *Sir Henry Maine* the joint family is like a corporation where trustee is the father Everyone in the joint family works according to his capabilities but obtains according to his needs Thus it realises the socialistic ideal From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs

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Demerits of Joint Family

If joint family system has received the highest praise for its many advantages, it has no less been vehemently denounced The main defects of the system are said to be the following

(i) Home for idlers—Joint family is the home for idlers and drones as the non-earning members do not want to earn their livelihood When a person can eat comfortably without exerting himself, he is unlikely to indulge in any strenuous activity Mostly, in the joint family it happens that some people have to exhaust themselves while the others lead a life of utter lethargy

(ii) Hindrance in the development of personality—In joint family there is very little opportunity for the fostering of individual autonomy or self- dependence The whole environment of the family is not congenial for the growth of the individual because he is bound down by the minutes, rules and regulations framed by the head of the family who looks upon men and women as children even when they attain adulthood

(iii) Encourages litigation—The joint family system encourages litigation, for at the time of partition of common property generally disputes crop up which are not settled without

a recourse being taken to law. In case of agricultural families partition leads to fragmentation of holding which is harmful from the viewpoint of agricultural progress.

(iv) Leads to quarrels—It is the hotbed of quarrels and bickerings especially among the female members There is continuous strife and fighting over the doings of children There is also the clash of ideas and temperaments on account of which there are constant quarrels between the elder and young members of the family.

(v) Privacy denied—In a joint family privacy is denied to the newly wed couple. The brides of the sons do not get an opportunity to develop their personality They serve the entire family like slaves They hardly meet their husbands during the day The invariable presence of other family members ashamed the bride and she cannot freely talk to her husband Any natural love between husband and wife is prevented from blossoming There is also no limit to the injustice done by the mother-in-law. In some cases this injustice becomes so inhuman and unbearable that women become fed up and commit suicide

(vi) Unfavorable accumulation of capital—It is not favourable to large accumulation of capital When one has to share one's income with large family, it is not possible to save much. The property of the family being jointly owned, is sometimes allowed to go waste

(vii) Uncontrolled procreation—In the joint family the responsibility for bringing up and educating the children is shared No individual feels responsibility to control procreation because of the limited income of the family. The offspring of one member will be treated on the same footing as others No distinction is made between the status of the family members In this way no direct benefits occur to an individual in the joint family by practicing family planning or earning more

Thus, the joint family system has got both its strong proponents as well as opponents However, we are to remember that no institution is perfect and also that no institution full of defects can exist very long The joint family system has been in existence since the society changed from the agricultural stage of economic development While the system is breaking down in cities, it still largely prevails in the villages especially among the agricultural families Though there may be exceptions here and there, yet it cannot be said that the system has been completely abolished It is no doubt true that the system once considered the pillar of stability is finding it difficult to withstand the dizzying pace of social mobility and the transformation of values.

Disintegration of Joint Family

The following factors are responsible for the disintegration of joint family system

(i) Industrialization—The joint family system is most suited to agricultural families India today *is on the way to* industrialization With the establishment of new factories workers from the villages move to the cities which breaks up the joint family

(ii) Extension of communications and transport—As we saw above difficulties of communication and travel in ancient times compelled all the members of the family to live together and carry on the family occupation in agriculture and trade jointly To day when the means of communication and transport have been extended it is no longer necessary for men to stay with the family and carry on the family occupation Now they go to the city and take up any other occupation or even living in the village adopt some other trade and when they adopt a trade different from the family trade, they establish a new home

(iii) Decline of agriculture and village trades—The joint family system in India flourished in the days of yore when agriculture and trade in the villages were in a sound position Today with the establishment of factories the commodities produced by the village draftsmen cannot compete in quality or price with those produced in factories with the result that the village industries suffer a loss and after some time close down With the *closing down of the village industry the workers move to the city* The pressure on land is high and the workers on land also are compelled to go to the city to find a job there Owing to the inrush of people from the villages to the cities the Hindu joint family system breaks down Besides the decline of agriculture and trade there are other causes as well which induce people to move to the city They lack facilities for entertainment and recreation, less opportunities for employment for the educated and inadequate opportunities for the education of children A gentleman *so called* finds little attraction to stay in the village

(iv) Impact of the West—India today has been greatly influenced in her social outlook by western thought and ideology Our modern laws relating to marriage and divorce have been enacted on western pattern Our education is entirely foreign in outlook and approach We have begun to look at the family as a

partnership and not as a sacrament Our views especially of the young men and women on sex and family relations have undergone a change The influence of individualism has made deep inroads in the Indian outlook

(v) **New Social Legislation**—The joint family system in India has been very much influenced by the new social legislations consisting of the Civil Marriage Act (1872), Hindu Marriage Act (1955) and Hindu Succession Act (1956). The Civil Marriage Act enabled the adult boys and girls to marry against the wishes of their parents The Hindu Marriage Act enabled the women to seek divorce under certain conditions The Hindu Succession Act gave the right of equal inheritance to women All these acts have influenced the solidarity of the joint family and relationships between brother and sister, parents and children and husbands and wives

K S Sambaswan, a contemporary Indian writer, dealing with the effect of the modern forces on the working class families of India writes

"Industrialization has contributed much to family disorganization In its result most of the important ties that bind all family members together in an agricultural society began to loosen Again, the worker unaccustomed to the work, life in the factory also becomes disorganized and in such a condition is not able to enjoy the richness of the family. This condition affects his emotions also, leading him to seek pleasure through in natural forces like alcohol, prostitution etc Factory occupation has made members of the same family economically independent. The joint family, so common in India, is gradually disappearing".

Most of the women when questioned by researchers express themselves against joint family system and prefer to live in separate families It means that the joint family system under modern influence is weakening

It is, however, to be remembered that joint family system in India has not completely died out The causes of its disintegration are mainly social The Indian people still keep intact the family attachment and live their traditional morality Hindu sentiments *are even today in favour of joint family The thinkers who criticize* the system have not been able to appreciate it properly. Compromise and mutual adjustment are the key notes of the Indian joint family system The joint family is not a place where individuality is crushed but it is a cooperative institution where every member does his duty under the guidance of the eldest

members In its we have a synthesis of individual and common interests, here are inculcated social virtues which make man *a good citizen* and teach him to live for all What is needed today is to find out the ways by which the virtues of the joint family system can be retained And this will require the intelligent cooperation of rulers and social scientists aided by enlightened public opinion

Changes in The Family in India

Changes involve both structural and attitudinal changes such as family obligations, decision-making, the relationship between husband and wife, and the socialization of the children *The nuclear family unit, the changing rules and upgraded status of employed married women have given rise to new value and attitudes that are not supportive of the traditional code of behaviour*

In various studies on the Indian Family (Dube 1955, Gough 1956, Madan 1965, Mayer 1966, Rose 1961, Sharma 1951, Srinivas 1952a, 1952b) we find three types of description of interpersonal relations, depending upon the level of abstraction—(1) description of the basic roles and relationships in the family, (such as husband-wife, father-son, mother-son, father-daughter, mother daughter, father-sister, elder brother-younger brother, mother-daughter, brother-sister, elder brother-younger-brother, mother-in-law, daughter in-law and so on) (2) description of more general categories (i e , each subsuming several basic roles and relationships) such as the Hindu widow, the Hindu woman, the aged, the youth, and so on and (3) description of the general nature of interpersonal relations in the family, particularly of the personality traits and social values fostered in it

(i) Traditionally, when a bride joins of her new household, she is expected to almost merger her identify with her husband's family Promila Kapur in her study had found that more and more educated women have started challenging the conventional and traditional husband-wife relationship in which there is husband's absolute superiority and do minance over the wife, and in which the wife is supposed to surrender herself completely to the will of her 'master' and even suffer in silence This is indicated by the fact that the percentage of such women has increased considerably who disapproved of a relationship of "Husband's superiority wife', inferiority 'and on husband's dominance, and wife submission " On the other head, the number of these women the also increased who

believe that in marriage there should be mutual love, consideration, and development of personalities of both husband and wife. They prefer a relationship of "co-partnership" and of 'Companionship' in which both the partners not only have equally important status in the family but also respect each other as equals and have equal partnership in marital relationships In ten years in their attitudes there, was found to be more emphasis on "Co partnership" Yet after ten years the accent was not so much on absolute equality as on equal worth of each partner and on mutual love, respect and sharing between husband and wife They also feel now, more than before that in marital relationship both the partners should equally share the burden and responsibility of marriage, home, and children That is, their attitudes towards marital relationship are becoming more equalitarian with emphasis on 'Companionship' and on 'sharing of love interests, joys as well as problems '

M S Gore in his study 'Urbanization and family change in India' had found that the proportion of women who are close to their children is larger than the proportion of those who are close to their husband The nuclear family is moving further away from the joint family is as a system of relationships, the women's relative closeness to her husband and children might also undergo change Urban men and more educated women tend to say that they are equally close to their mothers and wives, urban women and more educated women tend to say that they are closer to their husbands than to their children

M R Wood in his study had found that change in Indian culture frequently indicate that although need pattern of behaviour and belief may characterise the activities of both men and women inside the home The present study suggests that when women as well as men participate in outside activities, new ways of thinking and behaving are introduced in the home. A women whose work is aware of job opportunities and job requirements and has a personal stock in the allocation of income, this develops a sense of identity and sense of purpose apart from those gained through her familial roles of wife, daughter- in-law and mother and through her activities in the outside world she comes to know and accept differing behaviours and beliefs.

(ii) **Mother-in-law relations**—Jyoti Barot in his study had found that in the area of family relationships, the study indicated that the relationship with in-laws were less than cordial more often in the case of women than of man The relationship between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law was found to be at :agonistic'

in 62 of 259 cases, and for almost 50 percent of the wives the relationship was less than cardial In these cases the wives found their mother-in-law to be too interfering and their husbands to be over indulgent towards their mothers even at the expenses of the interest of the wife and children The study revealed that one third of the husbands considered their wives to be more responsible for conflicts between the wife and mother-in-law, while more than two-thirds of the wives were of the view that their husbands held them responsible for there conflicts Slightly less than one-sixth of the husbands were aware that their wives perceived them to be siding with other mother, whereas more than one third of the wives were of the opinion that their husband were aligned with their mothers

(iii) **Parent-child Relations**—It has been observed by several workers that in the traditional joint household parent-child relationship is complex in nature There are many adults for the child to interact with and, therefore, demands on any one individual are not so intense There is no scope for parent-child interaction to the same extend as in nuclear household Conversely, models for identification area also varied In the emerging nuclear families, because of the intimacy of relationship between parents and children, the interactions also are intense Expectations and demands on each other increase Any parent brought up in a joint household will find it difficult to cope with there demanded The results of unfulfilled demands and unsatisfied needs create considerable tension among all the members

E K. Gough in his study 'Relations in the elementary family,' describes the relations between brothers as "Convertley hostile to each other so that the sibling group as a whole relation acts as an organised, solidary unit " Her general conclusion is that parent-son relationship is "a unique and sacred bond "

According to A.M Shah "If one of the son sets up a separate household during the lifetime of the Parents, the father-son bond is not as strong as Gough describes Even if all the sons remain in the father's household, the existence of covert hostility between sons would affect the father son relationship. which would not be identical for all the sons

(iv) **Inter personal relations and changing authority Pattern**—A.D. Ross in her study The Hindu Family in it's urban setting had found that the Parttern of authority in different relationship, such as with grandfather, grand mother, father, mother, spouse and is changing The most important one in

regard to the tussle over authority is the mother-in-law daughter-in law relationship In studying the changes in the substructure of sentiments in the new type of family, attention is aptly giving to the changing relationship between mother and daughter particularly with the increase in age at marriage and to that between mother and son, and brother and sister in the context of the husband-wife bond which, the author says, is becoming closer. This is as an area of strain and problem Some strains in the authority pattern of the family do arise on account of the younger generations' urge for freedom, but on the whole there is not yet the evidence, among urban middle-class-families, that even when they (younger generation) live as separate units, the control of the elders completely disappears, however, there is evidence that the elder generation no longer dominates the younger to the some degree on in the same way" Transition from joint to nuclear families also alters the nature of affection and sentiments in inter-personal relationship of family members Love of one's own children, affective bonds between husband and wife become more particularized and become intense, and bounds uniting collateral relatives tend to be weakened thus altering the very structure of traditional joint family sentiments But change in this sphere are rather slow An important example of sociological result of changes in the structure of sentiments is the break down in the matrilineal TARVADA families of Kerala, where with accumulation of private property, growth of business connections or higher education, a person of the younger generation wants to establish a separate *home for himself his wife and children, away from the traditional* Travada form of joint family According to Yogendra Singh "In mate selection, the principle of personal choice, especially in urban families, is today increasingly reconciled with parents approval, the wife's freedom in middle-class homes to work outside in office and schools operates within the traditional frame work of the husband's approval and sometimes the approval of the husband's or even wife's parents "

(v) Role conflict and changing Interpersonal relations—C.A. Hate has produced a number of work on women in India She feels that a deep and vital change has taken place in the economic condition and personal status of women While examining the changes in the status of women in India with the advent of Independence, She an
social background of this change
though incomplete change in w

chief motivation for working appears to be family support The dualrole of women is still not fully recognized by society Mary working mothers experience role conflict and live with a feeling of guilt Promila Kapur in her study had found that educated working women are being influenced by egalitarian ethos while the traditional authoritarian and male-dominated set-up of the Hindu Social structure continues to be basically the same There can only be avoided if there is harmony between the pace of change in the attitudes of women and that of other members of her role sets on the one hand and between the attitude and the social structure on the other According to Kala Ram' working women carry the burden of *housekeeping and young children educations* It seems that due to the growth of education the role of wife and mother has changed, but that of husband and father remains unchange

A.M. Shah in his study 'The Household Dimension of the Family in India' had found that two given relatives behave in one way when they reside in a single house-hold, and in another way when they reside in two different households Further more, all relation-ships of a person with the members of his house-hold as well as with the members of relate' households are affected by *the development process*

I.P. Desai in his study 'Some Aspe+ of Family in Mahuva' had found that the relatives between whom intimate relationship exist are father son, brother-brother, uncle-brother's son, uncle's son and father's son The circle of r'latives is thus much wider than the circle of husband, wife and children, though intimacy of relations decrees as the relatives become more distant However, increase in the Physical distance between the same relatives does not lead to decrease in the intimacy among them The norm of jointness do not become weak due to migration As could be expected, it is stronger between near relatives than between distant relatives

Contribution of Important Sociologist's on Family in India

Three important sociologists have discussed family in India in detail Their contribution is significant They are Irawti Karve, K.M Kapadia and I P Desai We will discuss these in detail

1. Irawti Karve's Contribution

"A joint family" according to Irawati Karve,is a group of people who generally live under one roof, who eat food cooked in

one kitchen and who hold property in common, participate in common family worship and are related to one another as some particular type of Kindred". Tome people remain away for an indefinite period but they always to their ancestral village as their home His linkage with the ancestral land or house remain in tact and may return there periodically for magical-ritual observances She distinguishes between then northern type and the Tharwd found in Kerala. In the northern type, those men who trace descent from a common male ancestor from the core of family, with them are associated women who are brought as brides and the young unmarried daughters of the family Thus there are three or four generations of males related to the male ego as grand father and brothers, father and his brothers, own brothers and his cousins, sons and nephews and wives of all male relatives plus the ego's own unmarried sisters and daughters Occasionally father's sisters may come to live as a widow for support and shelter. The northern type is therefore patrilineal and patriocal and the married women lives in the houses of their father in law.

On the other hand, in Tharwad, in relation to the male ego, the members of such a family are : mother's mother, and her sisters and brothers ; mother and her sisters and brothers, own brothers and sisters, mother's sister sons and daughters and the children of ego's sisters There are thus no relations by marriage in this type of family.

The division of the Joint-family does occur but it spells is as many units as there are individual families In fact, smaller joint families are set up Ties with the joint family and the ancestral land adds prestige so important for the health and well being of the individuals In the northern type, the family depicts strong sense of the unity of its men This is absent among the matrilined people Wives, in the northern type, are often charged with breaking the family but Karve also points out their cementing role The joint family is a community in itself proving for almost all physical and cultural necessities, Children have a large number of playmates Men and women tend to segregate Children are fondled not by their immediate parents but others in the family, A man can speak to his wife only occasionally when young Even later, he addresses her only indirectly as per conversion. The women have to adjust to other women and a lost of others The loyalty to her husband is loyalty to the agnatic joint family of the husband

"A joint family of this type", Karve write, "is always an existing group to live in ..Now it is the marriage, an initiation ceremony, the birth of a new baby, the puberty rites of a new bride, a particular family ritual, a fast, a feast and sometimes a death

The wide extent of the family always ensures the coming and going of guests, There is always beestle and expectation, laughter and quarrel discussion and plans"

2. C.M. Kapadia's Contribution

K.M Kpadia in his writing 'Marriage and Family in India', devoted 3 chapters to the joint family in India In the first chapter Kapadia has reviewed the historical texts and the approach is mainly textual & legalistic pertaining to properly rights & its parbition He concludes that family in India has remained joint and mainly patriarchal despite trends towards individualism The chapter on family in an urban setting incorporates the results of a member of studies such as those of K.T Merchant I P Desai & B V Shah besides his own On the basis of these surveys, he concludes that joint family is not to be associated necessarily with villages, It is stranger in long settled populations of towns Agriculturists & artisian castes, whether they live in towns or villages live predominantly in joint families As regards preferences for the joint family, people mentioned enough stresses and strains But they are also aware of the advantages of joint family living such as economic help, refuse at the time of Crisis, restraining influence on husband-wife tensions There is thus a distinct preference for the joint family in the minds of the people

Finally, Kapadia also evaluated recent trends affecting the joint family Since the British days, legislation gave greater rights to individual members Labour laws reduced the reliance on the joint family to some extent At the same time, Kapadia insists that the joint family was not disintegrated Kapadia distinguishes between (a) residentially and functionally joint family and (b) only functionally joint family Like I P Desai, Kapadia too advocates *looking at the family as a set of relationships and functioning unit* though consisting of residentially separate house holds Thus he maintains that the form of the family may have changed but not its functions The cultural ideal of "Care of the dependents" favours the continuance of the joint family"

3. I.P. Desai's Contribution

The outstanding contribution of I P Desai has been in the field of Family in India He seems to suggest that though traditional of the Indian joint family is changing but in essence the joint family in India is not disintegrating This is based on consideration of two distinct criteria of the joint family viz The first is the structure or composition of the family and second type of relationship obtaining among its members Most conceptions of the breaking up of joint family are based upon the composition or physical aspect In is study Mahuva Desai found 61% households of the elementary

or nuclear type and 30% households of the joint type Considered from the view point of quality of interaction or social relationship, the situation is reversed Only 5 of the households depict Zero degree of sentiments where as 95% show sentiments varying from low to high degree of sentiments

Detailed study of the 425 households of Mahuva-a small town of 25000 persons in the Saurashtra region of Gujarat-led Desai to classify house into 4 categories based on composition—

  I (a) Husband-wife only.

      (b) Uni-member household,

 II (a) Husband-wife and married sons without children and other unmarried children

      (b) The above group with other relative not adding generation depth

 III Three generation groups of lineal descendants.

 IV Four or more generations of lineal descendants

Desai found 61% households of the type-I-a to II b Type III and IV constituted only 31% of the households These consideration affirm the breaking up of the joint family thesis But looked at from another view point, the thesis of the breaking of joint family is dismissed This is based on measuring sentiments on a scale ranging from zero to high Desai found that only 5% house holds show zero degree of jointness where as 90% households shows sentiments ranging from low to high From the above analysis, Desai concluded that the joint family in India is not disintegrating

The study of High School students in Poona (1953) is a study of the attitudes of younger generation towards elders in the joint family The ideology of the joint family stipulates co-operative efforts, the observance of certain norms and the authority of the elders Young people in the family do not object to cooperation Students reported that they work voluntarily out of understanding and attachment to their parents and family Desai reported that participation in such works gives them a sort of satisfaction of helping their parents and a sort of place in the family The elders also show courtesy and have become liberal in their attitudes towards children Fend children are punished for avoiding work in the family Desai reported from his study that the former authoritarian attitude of the elders is more or less absent in the contemporary Hindu family The result is that the emotional link between the old and new generation is not under strain conflict situations do arise but are restricted and soon overcome. In general, then, the joint family continues and its break up is not imminent

5

MARRIAGE IN INDIA
MAJOR CHARACTERISTICS & CHANGES

Marriage is the institution of satisfying the biological needs, especially the sexual needs of the individual in a legal and *customary manner* The individual's biological passions are also regulated through marriage The nature, structure and function of marriage have changed during the long existence of society The types and functions of marriage cannot be the same in different cultures In spite of this the institution of marriage is universal like that of a family. In all cultures, marriage is the accepted means of institutionally satisfying the sexual and procreative urge

It would better to understand the origin of marriage before we discuss the Definition of marriage

Origin of Human Marriage

The evolutionists, ever keen on building schemes of unilinear evolution, i e , evolution in a straight line, sought to establish a long chain of development at the lower end of which they put promiscuity, without any taboo even on incest, and at the top of which they put enforced monogamy as it prevailed in 19th century Western Society Morgan's scheme has been already referred to in the discussion on the family It may be pointed out that the startling conclusions regarding promiscuity and group marriage were drawn mostly from certain types of kinship terms which *failed to* differentiate between *different kin, and from the laxity of sex* morals in some pre-literate societies Thus, among some of the tribes of Middle India, on festive occasions, some pre-marital and extra-marital license obtains, though the society is strictly monogamous, as, e.g , the Ho are In recent scientific formulations, based on more data, the classification, rather than description, of kin as also the laxity of sex morals have been explained otherwise Actually, at the present moment, there is no evidence of promiscuity coming from simple cultures In India, the simplest and the rudest *of tribal cultures we know, e g , the Andamanese,* the Kadar, the Paliyan, the Malapantaram, the Chenchu, the Birhor and others, do not furnish us any evidence of promiscuity In fact, monogamy and marital fidelity are reported from most of the tribes Monogamy is the general rule, although it is not an *obligatory one, it obtains in the sense that there is a socially* permitted marital relationship with only one persons at a time As long as divorce does not take place, the occurrence of extra-marital relations are infrequent. Monogamy has also been reported from the Kamar, a backward tribe of Madhya Pradesh; and it has been reported that among the Baiga, polygyny is on the decline The

list of those Indian tribes which fall in the same category as the Baiga in this respect would run into scores. Evidence from outside India points in the same direction. Lowie sums up the position very well by stating that promiscuity, in the technical sense, must have undoubtedly existed at that point of history when the ancestor of modern man had not yet developed a culture with norms for judging sexual behaviour, but the very simplest of contemporary cultures do not furnish any evidence of group marriages to enable us to substantiate the evolutionary scheme. Indian data, as indicated above, are no exception to the rule. However, as Lowie points out, a state somewhat like that of group-marriage, is found as a recent development among the Toda, a tribe by no means one of the simplest in India The Toda were formerely polyandrous and practised female infanticide When the new system of law and order was introduced by the British, infanticide became a crime, and the sex-ratio got more or less equalized. However, the Toda did not give up polyandry as a consequence but developed polygyny also in association with polyandry. Thus, whereas formerly several brothers married one woman, now they marry more than one woman This nearest approach to group marriage, where no particular individual has exclusive marital rights over any of the spouses, is a recent development in a comparatively sophisticated society. A similar process of the emergence of group marriage has been reported from the Khasa.

'   In the light of the above, the evolution of marriage as a sequential scheme is no acceptable Westermarck takes the stand that marriage has in all probability developed out of a primeval habit, and gets the support of Malinowski, who believes that the family as a grouping has been taken over by man from the highly developed apes However, it becomes difficult to accept the implication that monogamy is a natural instinct and a primeval habit in view of the fact that polygyny is very widely prevalent in the world. Out of the 250 societies studies by Murdock, polygyny existed in 195, as against 43 monogamous societies. From the data collected among Indian tribes, it is found that the restrictions, if any, on polygyny are more socio-economic than strongly moral or instinctive Thus, if every Ho does not live in a polygynous family, it is because he cannot afford to pay the bride price over again. The influence of Hinduism and Christianity, and conversion to the latter, also act as preventive factors in parts of Chota Nagpur and Assam

To conclude, marriage and the family being two aspects of the same social reality, viz the bio psychical-cum-social drives (needs) of man, are coeval with each other and with culture, because *without the family there could be no preservation of the species and culture, and without marriage there could be no family* A search into the origins of marriage is, therefore, unnecessary and not likely to lead us to any important conclusions which cannot be arrived at, and understood, with reference to the functions and forms of this important and universal institution Historical data are relevant only in finding out why a particular society has developed a particular form of marriage and not why the institution itself has developed In order to study its functions, we would look into the reasons underlying marriage

Meaning & Definition of Marriage

Marriage is the most widespread institution of human society Since the pre historic period, up to the present age, marriage has remained the backbone of human civilization Therefore, the institution of marriage occupies a very important *place in human society*

There are various definitions of the word 'marriage' Most of them explain the juridical and the ethical aspect of marriage According to Westermark, "Marriage is nothing more than a more or less durable connection between a male and female lasting beyond the mere act of propagation till after the birth of the *offspring*"

This definition is biological in nature and excludes those relations of a male and female which do not come within the category of marriage Thus it does not deal the particular element of human marriage Besides this, it also excludes all temporary alliances of male and female

According to Havelock Ellis, marriage is a union prompted by mental love and a method of propagating the race According to E.A. Hoebal, "Marriage is the complex of social forms that define, and control the relation of mated pair to each other, their kinsemen, their offspring and society"

Similarly, according to Ellen Key, "Marriage signifies the living together of two people upon the ground of love and the parent-hood of children"

Harry M. Johnson believes that marriage is a stable relationship which society allows to man and woman in the community without losing its existence This type of stable relationship has two conditions, namely sexual gratification and, procreation G.P. Murdock emphasises marriage as living together with regular sexual relationship and economic cooperation Thus the basic elements of marriage are socially sanctioned sexual relationship - between man and woman as husband and wife, their togetherness, procreation and economic cooperation Husband, wife, children, common residence and economic cooperation form the family As a group the family is based on rules and behavioural system Marriage is a system that regulates the family. Therefore, it is called an institution Thus family and marriage are inter-dependent Both marriage and family possess institutional structures The mutual relationship of marriage and the family have the following characteristics :

1   Marriage is a specific relationship between two individuals of opposite sexes and it is based on mutual rights and obligations These specific relationships form the family.

2   As a system of rules, marriage is an institution The structure of the family is built by the mutual relationships of many individuals

3   In Islam marriage is a contract while in Hinduism it is a sacrament.

4   Marriage regulates sex relationship

5   Procreation, bringing up children, mutual love and economic cooperation are other necessary elements of marriage

6   Society institutionally recognises sexual gratification through marriage Thus marriage renders sexual gratification patterns based on laws

7. The couple fulfil their mutual obligations on the basis of customs or rules accepted by law.

8   Validity is given to procreation by marriage Its aim is to form the family, bring up children and educate them

9   All societies have their own customs and systems of marriage In almost all societies marriage and religious activities are connected with each other. In modern society marriages are performed in courts also Religious practices are also connected with marriage

10 There are certain symbols of marriage such as the ring, vermilion, special clothes, special signs in front of the house, and so on

Types of Marriage

The *types of marriage in different communities and cultural groups* differ according to their customs and systems of thought In certain cultures marriage is a sacrament while in others it is just a contract The types of marriage can be classified on the following basis

1   Endogamy and Exogamy

2   Number

(1) Endogamous and exogamous marriages—On the basis of internality and externality marriage may be classified into the following categories,

1   Endogamous marriage

2   Exogamous marriage

Generally both these systems exist simultaneously in all societies In the endogamous marriage individuals marry within their own caste, tribe, group or community When we examine the tribes and castes of India we find that embers of a tribe or a caste are expected to marry within the same tribe and caste There are some inherent reasons for such marriages First ,of all every group generates certain methods of preserving its purity From this point of view the endogamous marriage systems are vitally important Through *endogamous marriage system the group can maintain its* secrets of sacrament and skill On the other hand, this system divides the group into many inner-divided groups The continuance of endogamous marriage strengthens social inequality by rationalising the feeling of superiority and inferiority It can be observed in the Indian caste system In principle the exogamous marriage is just contrary to endogamous marriage But in actual practice both endogamous and exogamous marriage systems exist in the same caste *or tribe In caste system the members of a caste are expected* to marry within their own caste but at the same time they are expected not to marry with close-blood relatives, members of their *own family,* members of the same patrilineal group, *pinda* and *pravar* This practice can be found in tribal, agrarian and industrial societies Similarly, members of a tribe are also expected not to marry within their own family, kula and patrilineal group

A taboo on sexual relations between closely related kin like parents and children and between siblings is universal An extension of this 'nuclear prohibition' is found everywhere, includ-

ing among the castes and tribes of India Since the practice of marrying outside the family is found extended to winder groups like clans, as among the Gond, the Baiga, the Ho, the Korwa, the Oraon, the Khasi, the Naga and so on, the conclusion is that rules of incest can not have a biological implication, viz. the ban on inbreeding due to the fear that it may lead to racial degeneration Psychological disorders, being the effect rather than the cause of incest, also do not supply a full motive The cultural factor of widening the area of co-operative social contact may be considerably responsible for this prohibition on sex-relations between close relatives Breaches of the rule are often punished by inflicting heavy fines upon, or excommunicating, the offender. The fear of supernatural punishment in case of the violation of the rule of marrying out is widespread in tribal India This above mentioned practice of marrying outside one's clan is called *exogamy*. A breach of exogamy brings disaster to the Khasi. It entails excommunication, refusal of funeral ceremonies and no resting place in the sepulcher of the clan

It has been explained elsewhere in this book that exogamy is generally a characteristic of the clan system based on totemic designations But it must be pointed out that exogamy is much more widely distributed than totemism. Goldensweiser and many others have disputed a causal link between the two institutions Then, what may be the origin of exogamy ?

Herbert Risley, in his book on the people of India, says that probably there has existed in man a tendency to vary. This desire must have driven man to seek marital alliance with strangers, unfamiliar and unknown to him.

Westermarck has recorded that when he asked one of the Berbers of Morocco why he did not marry within the village, he was asked in reply how he, the Berber, could do so, having seen all the girls growing up in the village along with him Such an aversion for the familiar may be the explanation underlying exogamy This would, however, be in direct opposition to the neo-Freudian viewpoint, viz that sexual intimacy between primary kin exists, and being in the nature of incest, such attraction must be repressed, and exogamy is one such social mechanism. Malinowski has pointed out the reality of incestuous feelings that do often manifest themselves in overt behaviour. The very elaborate rules for the prevention of incest, which are universal, bear witness to such possibilities

Audrey Richards has, on the basis of here researches among Africans, pointed out that psychologists and anthropologists have often overrated the role of sex, hunger being in reality a more fundamental and compulsive 'drive' than sex In hunting and food gathering societies, food is difficult to obtain Women and children are generally a burden in such societies,particularly those which rely more on hunting This could have led to female infanticide,which, in consequence, would lead to female scarcity This must have led to marriage by capture, and as the next step-since such capture had to be effected from outside the tribe to exogamy Thus, food scarcity may be, historically speaking, a probable cause of exogamy

The reverse practice of marrying within one's tribe, or, very rarely, clan, is called **endogamy** The two main clans of the Toda tribe, the *Tarthuroi and the Teivaliol, and endogamous, but their* sub divisions, the sibs are exogamous The Bhil also have two similar endogamous groups,the Ujale Bhil and the Mele Bhil Due to the universal fear of the strange, the novel, and the unknown, almost all the Indian tribes are endogamous It is the fear of the *neighbour's witchcraft and sorcery which is the prime cause for* the Korwa endogamy Territorial, socio-cultural and linguistic units share enough thought and action-patterns to want to preserve them by endogamy Besides, territorial and linguistic factors impose limits on the communication of thoughts and persons (spouses) between various groups However, the barriers of endogamy have been broken down by several sophisticated tribes like the Gond, the Bhil and the Santhal, who have tried to get incorporated into the vast body of Hindu castes by marrying into the lower castes the purpose of such a movement being the desire to rise in the estimation of the Hindu neighbours

In certain cases there is a prescription, or only a preference expressed for marriage to a particular kin Thus, we find that a Gond must marry his/her cross cousin, and if one would like to have this prescription waived in one's case, a compensation has to be paid to the losing party Fifty four per cent of Gond marriages were fond by Grigson to be of this type The Kharia and the Oraon practise cross-cousin marriage, and so do the Khasi, though the latter can have such a marriage only after the death of one's own father, with one's paternal aunt's daughter The Kadar prescribe marriage with paternal cousins, they are thoroughly endogamous

ı   **Cross-cousin marriage,** as a form of exogamy, the only form of exogamy under dual organization, is oft4en explained to

be a device for avoiding payment of a high bride price, and also for maintaining property in the household. The Gond of Madhya Pradesh call this form of marriage *dudhlautawa*, 'return of milk'. The implication is that the bride price paid by A for his wife would be returned to his family when A's daughter marries her mother's . brother's son (See Diagram)
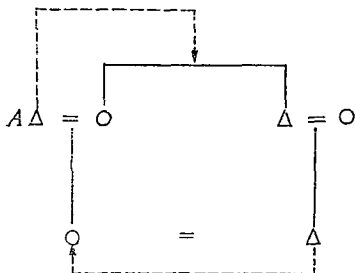
C Levi-Strauss has said that preferential mating has for its main purpose the strengthening of solidarity within a tribe Others, like Homans, doubtful about the primitive's concern with, and ability of understanding what is good for them in the remoter sense in which solidarity is good for a people, have said that preferential mating is the outcome of other features of a society Thus, the rule of marrying one's mother's brother's daughter may be only expected in matripotestal families. Exogamy amounting to scope for marrying anyone except one's sistere and mother, with some prejudice against marriage to first cousins on the father's side, has been reported from the Lushei clans of Assam.

Levirate and Sororate—Preferential marriages are also often designed to promote inter familiar cordiality by making certain linkages imperative Among the Toda, the practice has been for one woman to marry several brothers *(fraternal or adelphic polyandry)* This practice of being mate, actual or potential, to one's . husband's brothers is called *levirate*. When several sisters are '

simultaneously, or potentially, the spouses of the same man, the practice is called *sororate* It is generally found to prevail among tribes that pay a bride price for a wife The death of a spouse is compensated by supplying a new spouse, generally a younger sister of the deceased Levirate and sororate emphasize the acceptance of inter-familial obligations, and the recognition of marriage as a tie between two families, and not only between two individuals

It is obvious that these preferential or prescribed forms of mating limit the number of possible marital linkages Nonetheless, their distribution is universal

Number—Different societies have different types of marriages based on number On the basis of number, marriages may be divided into **monogamous and polygamous marriages** Today the principle of monogamy, i e one husband or one wife, is being emphasised throughout the world In actual practice also the type of monogamous marriage is prevalent Demographically also the proportion of men and women is equal *This fact also establishes* rationality of monogamy Monogamy is also rational from the viewpoint of bringing up of children

Polygamy, that is marriage to more than one person, is fairly widespread all over the world Murdock reports 78 per cent polygamous families in his sample of 250 In tribal India also, polygamy is widespread Two forms of polygamy may be differentiated, **polygyny** is the marriage of one man to several women and **polyandry** the marriage of one woman to several men Both type of marriage are referred to as polygamy in common parlance

Polygyny is found among the Naga tribes, the Gond, the Baiga, the Toda, the Lushei clans and most of the other Proto-Australoid tribes of Middle India The Khasi, the Santhal and the Kadar are among those that are monogamous Excessively high bride prices have forced monogamy on many, as e g , on the Ho

Polyandry is, comparatively, much restricted in distribution It is found among the Tiyan, the Toda, the Kota, the Khasa, and the Ladakhi Bota From Kashmir to Assam, among the Indo Aryan as also the Mongoloid peoples, polyandry is reported The Nayars were polyandrous and there are many survivals of the custom found among them even today

In India, polyandry is of two types When several brothers share the same wife, as among the Khasa and the Toda, we have *adelphic* or *fraternal polyandry* In the general type, also found among the Toda, there need not be any close relationship between

the husbands, and the wife goes to spend some time with each husband. So long as a woman lives with one of her husbands, the others have no claim over her. Nayar polyandry was of this type.

Polyandry is not everywhere explicable with reference to a preponderance of men over women as was posited by Westermarck. In Ladakh it was actually the women who were more in number. Among the Toda, property considerations and sex-disparity explain this institution.

Polyandry is found to lead to fewer children to every woman, more male children, and a high incidence of sterility among women. We are not yet certain of the biological reasons that could explain such facts. Among the Khasa there is a double standard of morality. Whereas a wife has to conform to the norms of married life, a daughter need not. Thus frequent visits to parents' houses make extra-marital relations possible.

Hypergamy—Under the kind of social structure that caste has given rise to in India, there are certain restrictions in the form of limits beyond which a man and a woman cannot go in the choice of a spouse, of course, he or she must invariably marry outside of his or her own *gotra*. Just as in modern times, if a millionaire's daughter, who chooses to marry a pauper who will accept no doles from his father-in-law, would lose her economic status, likewise, under the caste system, if a high-caste woman marries a low-caste man she loses caste status which is indicative of a degree of ritual purity. Up to marriage a daughter shares her father's caste status and after marriage her husband's. But a man himself does not lose caste status or ritual purity by marrying a low-caste woman, though his offspring would offer from a partial lowering from their father's caste status. Therefore, to prevent a woman from losing caste and becoming ritually impure, Manu and other ancient law-givers prescribed hypergamous (*anuloma*) marriage under which a man can marry from his own caste or from those below, but a woman can marry only in her caste or above. *Hypogamy* (*pratiloma*), i.e., marriage of a woman to a man from a lower caste is not permitted. Thus, for men, the following marriages are permissible.

Brahmin	—	Brahmin, Kshatrya, Vaish, Sudra
Kshatrya	—	Kshatrya, Vaish, Sudra
Vaish	—	Vaish, Sudra
Sudra	—	Sudra.

Likewise, for women ·

Sudra	—	Sudra, Vaish, Kshatriya, Brahmin
Vaish	—	Vaish, Kshatriya, Brahmin
Kshatriya	—	Kshatriya, Brahmin.
Brahmin	—	Brahmin.

The social consequences ,of such a practice are not only obvious but have also been borne out by historical facts Thus in the later decades of the last century, Brahmin girls had either to hold out the temptation of huge dowries (a kind of bridegroom price) or choose between polygyny and spinsterhood Among the Kulin Brahmins of Bengal, young men took to marrying several wives and would visit them at their parents' houses, otherwise, in the absence of financial solvency, which would solve the problem, spinsterhood was the only other alternative. Hence, Brahmins have traditionally despised female children and a daughter has become a synonym for a curse and the cause of her parents' discomfort and humiliation

Among the Sudra, the males have, as a consequence of hypergamy, to pay a high bride price or to choose between polyandry and bachelorhood This has often led to marriage by capture among the lower castes

Hindu Marriage

Among Hindus, marriage is a religious duty It is neither a social contract nor its ultimate aim is enjoyment procreation of children It is essential for every Hindu so that he may repay his social and parental debts Thus among Hindus, marriage is a 'Holy' union between a man and woman for begetting a son necessary for salvation and of religious duties Besides this, Hindu marriage is not considered dissolved after the death of any one of the partners Marriage is so indispensable among Hindus that a person who does not marry is disdained According to Dr. P.V. Kane, "This is the most important of all Samskaras Throughout the ages for which literary tradition is available in Indian marriage has been highly thought off"

Religious Rites—The essential religious rites to be performed at the time of a Hindu marriage

(1) Vagdan—It is a ritual in which the parents of the bridegroom put the proposal for the marriage before the parents

of the bride But nowadays things are being reversed It is the bride's party which puts the proposal before the bridegroom's party.

(2) **Kanyadan**—In this kind of ritual the father of the girl offers his daughter to the bridegroom with holy and religious feelings in his mind

(3) **Panigrahan**—Marriage means Panigrahan, or the holding of the hand of the bride by the bridegroom Six mantras are uttered by the Pandit when six promises are made to each other by the bride and the bridegroom.

(4) **Hom**—Fire is kindled before the marriage and then fire as goddess is supposed to be the witness of the marriage ties. Both the parties to the marriage offer oblations to the goddess of fire.

(5) **Agniparayan**—In this ritual both the bride and the bridegroom go seven times round the fire and propose to each other to remain faithful throughout their lives

(6) **Ashmarohan**—The bride's brother keeps one foot of his sistere on a piece of stone advising her to remain as firm in her marriage ties as that stone on which she stands

(7) **Saptapadi**—This is the last rite of a Hindu marriage. Both the bride and the bridegroom take even rounds of the holy fire of marriage Yajna.

(8) **Lajahom**—In this ritual both the bride and the bridegroom stand facing each other and throw parched rice in the holy fire

(9) **Presence of Brahmin Priests**—The presence of a Brahmin purohit is also an essential part of the religious aspect of a Hindu marriage

(10) **Recitation of Vedic Mantras**—All the Vedic rituals relating to marriage are to be performed very meliculously and Vedic mantras are compulsory recited on this holy occasion.

(11) **Fire as Witness**—Goddess fire is kindled by the Pandit before the marriage ceremony is performed Fire is supposed to be a goddess to stand witness to the performance of the ritual of marriage

Aims of Hindu Marriage

Hindu marriage is a religious duty. These are definite and fixed Vedic rites which must be performed before the marriage is supposed to be solumnized. The important aims of a Hindu marriage are as under :

(1) **Dharma**—According to Prof K M Kapadia Hindu marriage is done primarily for the fulfillment of duties by a Hindu, but the basic aim of marriage was Dharma The Dharma was the highest, noblest and the most essential duty of a Hindu and it could not be done without a properly married wife. Every Hindu had to do five Mahayajnas which could be done only with a spouse

(2) **Progeny**—Second important aim of a Hindu marriage is to produce a son to preserve and continue the race Manusmrati says, "A son is one, who saves his father from going to hell"·

(3) **Rati or Sex**—The third important aim laid down in Hindu Shastras about Hindu marriage is to derive bodily pleasure, but it should be done in a very restrained way, because marriage for sex has never been ordained by Hindu thinkers Mahabharat says, "He, who does not give birth to a son, is irreligious" Thus the aim of marriage was only to have a son and not to indulge in sex pleasures alone Besides these three basic aims of a Hindu marriage four more aims have been described in Hindu Shastras

(4) **Purushartha**—Hindu philosophers have stressed on four basic objectives of a man's life in this world These four objectives are Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha These four objectives, particularly the first three can never be attained by a person unless he has married and has had a son by a duly married life

(5) **Development of Human Personality**—For the full and complete development of the personality of both the husband and the wife, marriage is a must. According to many Hindu law givers, a man without marriage is incomplete Marriage bestows upon him complete personality The duty of a married person is supposed to be complete only when he has a son.

(6) **Duty towards Family**—The object behind a Hindu marriage is to keep the continuity of one's family line by producing a son

(7) **Shouldering Family Responsibilities**—To enter into grahastha was nothing but to shoulder the heavy responsibilities of a Hindu joint family, when the parents become too old to work, it then becomes the bounden duty of the son to look after them The parents, who have given birth to a son, brought him up, educated him and then got him married, deserve all help and care when they become too old to help themselves Besides this every man owes a debt to society also He has to fill in the void created by the death of the members of older generation

Different Forms of
Hindu Marriage

There are different forms of Hindu marriage. Manusmrati has dealt with eight kinds of Hindu marriage. These are as follows :

(1) Brahma Marriage—This is said to be the best forms of Hindu marriage. *Manusmrati* defines it as, "Calling a bridegroom well-versed in the Vedas and of good character, offering him clothes and ornaments, and offering Kanyadan with a religious ceremony is called marriage Thus for the Hindu marriage is a ceremony or a sanskar, and as such the relation between marrying couples are of a sacramental nature. According to Kautilya's **Arthasastra,** "The giving in marriage amaiden well-adorned is called Brahma marriage "

(2) Daiva Vivah—In this form of marriage, the father gives her daughter along with ornaments to a priest who duly officiated at a sacrifice (Yajna) during the course of its performance Such marriages were more frequent in those times when Yajna was an essential part of the daily activities of Hindus. Manu also defines Dev marriage as, "When a well decorated girl with clothes and ornaments is offered to a purohit, it is known as Dev marriage."

(3) Arsha Vivah—In this type of marriage, the father used to give his daughter in marriage to a bridegroom after receiving a cow and a bull from the bridegroom. This taking of cow and bull was a religious requirement and should not be regarded as selling of daughter. It was rather a token of gratitude to the man offered his daughter to groom to enable him to fulfil the obligation of Grihasthashrama In this type of marriage the proposal comes from the bridegroom's side If the man is willing to marry he has to offers a cow and a bullock are their two pairs to the father of the bride.

(4) Prajapatya Vivah—The joint performance of sacred duties (by man and woman) is known as prajapatya marriage According to Sri Daya Nand Saraswati, father gives his daughter to the bride-groom by addressing the couple with the Mantram, 'may both of you perform together your dharma' Thus it appears that Brahma and Prajapatya forms of marriages are almost similar. Some authors are of the opinion, that in the origin there was no Prajapatya Vivah Only in later, period, it was added to the original seven forms of marriages Hence, It is just like the Brahma system of marriage In this marriage daughter's father says to the marring pair, "Both of you should live together performing all the religious acts throughout your life "

(5) Asura Vivah—In this form of marriage, the bridegroom had to pay the price of the bride to her father or to kinsman The amount of the price of the bride is fixed with bridegroom There is no fixed limit to the price It depends upon the status of the birde's family. This form of marriage is more popular amongst low caste Hindus This form of marriage is somewhat looked down upon by the members of higher castes Majority of Indian tribes practise this form of marriage According to *Manu*, "If a person accepts a girl willingly by offering money to the parents of the daughter according to his own capacity, it is called an Asur a type of marriage " If somebody paid this kind of money to the parents of the girl it was supposed to be showing a kind of respect for the girl and at the same time, the loss of the daughter to the family is compensated in the form of cash, which the family receives in return from the bridegroom

(6) Gandharva Vivah—In this form of marriage, mutual love and cosent between bride and bridegroom is only condition to bring about their union In other words this form of marriage is a voluntary union of a maiden with her lover Parents and kinsman have nothing to do in such marriages Sexual intercourse before marriage may occur between the couples But it is not regarded as a disqualification for their subsequent marriages Kamasutra regards this form of marriage ideal one According to *Manu*, A Gandharva marriage is, " When the bride and the bridegroom both show sex attraction and love towards each other and then marry It is designated as a Gandharva type of Hindu marriage "

According to *Gautam Rishi*, "If the girl and the person intending towards each other, and then marry, it is known as Gandharva type of marriage "

(7) Rakshasha Vivah—This type of marriage has been described by Hindu scriptures as the forcible abduction of a maiden from her home while she cries and weeps after her kinsmen have been slain or wounded and their houses broken It was prevalent in those times when loot of property and woman was regarded as the gifts of victory from our enemy Woman thus caused many fights and battles in ancient times According to *Manu*, "It is a kind of marriage, when the male forcibly takes her away from her home and marriages forcibly, it is known as Rakshasha type of marriage "

(8) Paishacha Vivah—Selection of a girl while she is sleeping in a state of intoxication is known as Paishacha Vivah Such marriage was almost prevalent among all warrior castes According to *Manu*, "To catch hold of a girl, while she is asleep,

or is in a drunken state, or is travelling alone or is involved in some troubled circumstances, to rape such a girl and then marry her against her will is known as paisach marriage."

According to Kautilya, "Of these first four are ancestral customs of old and are valid on their being approved by the father The rest for it is that they receive money, the money (sulka) paid by the bridegroom for their daugheter. In case of the absence by death of either the father or the mother, the survivor will receive the sulka If both of them are dead, the maiden herself shall receive it Any kind of marriage is approvable, provided it please to all those that are concerned in it"

Thus we find that these forms of Hindu marriages cover every mode of matrimonial union between a man and woman They are comprehensive in their scope But all three forms of marriages are not recognised by the Dharmasastras, out of these only form are valid on their being approved by the father.

Anulom and Pratilom Marriages

1. Anulom Marriage—Anulom marriage is the marriage between the members of two different castes, the male belonging a higher caste and the girl belonging to some lower caste, for example if a Brahmin boy marriages the daughter of a Kshatriya or a Vaishya, it would be called an Anulom marriage

2. Pratilom Marriage—Pratilom marriage is just the reversed form of Anulom marriage In this type of marriage the boy belongs to a lower caste, while his wife belongs to some higher caste than his own For example if a Kshatriya or a Vaishya boy marriages a Brahmin girl, it would be declared as Pratilom marriage.

Muslim Marriage

The social life of the Muslims is governed by the rules prescribed by their sacred scripture, 'Quran'. The laws of Muslim marriage are based on Quran The marriage among Muslims is a social contract which aims at getting legitimate offspring. Muslim marriage meets all the requirements of a valid contract provided in Indian Contract Act. For the purpose of marriages the bride and groom both must have healthy bodies and healthy minds and should not have any type of illegitimate connections. Boys and girls of less than 15 years of age cannot marry without the sanction of their

guardians The marriages among minor or mad persons are declared void. No religious ceremony or formality is required to make marital contract valid if the above mentioned rules are ‹ adhered The following are three essentials of Muslim marriage

(1) Proposal and its Acceptance—Among Muslims the *proposal of marriage and its acceptance should be carried out in the same meeting* The proposal of marriage is put in the presence of two males or one male and two females and it should be accepted immediately. If the proposal is made in one meeting and accepted in another, the marriage is not valid The presence of two persons is for the purpose of witnesses In the absence of witnesses marriage becomes irregular, but no void Among Shia Muslims the witnesses are not necessary

(2) Marital Capacity of the bride and the bridegroom— In the Muslim marriage, the bride and the bride-groom should possess ability and capacity to enter into marital contract Mentally deficient or insane persons cannot legitimately enter into matrimony The minors are *married with the permission of their guardians*

(3) *Absence of Impediments in Marriage*—A legitimate Muslim marriage can be contracted only in the absence of impediments in it These impediments are of two types, some which make marriage void and other which make it totally prohibited The latter do not make a marriage void, but only make it irregular

In the following circumstances a Muslim marriage is declared as void

(i) Polygamy—The marriage of a women becomes void if her other husband is alive The males, however have a right to marry three women other than the present wife The marriage with fifth women is void

(ii) Marriage with near Relatives—Muslim marriage is declared void if it is contracted with certain very near relatives, for example ascendents, such as *daughter, grant-mother, mother-in-law, etc descendents such as daughter, grand-daughter etc* among real sisters and brothers with the niece, grand daughter of the brother, daughter-in-law, wife of the grand-son or the wife of the son of the daughter

(iii) Marriage with Idol Worshipers—Muslim religion forbids idol worship The marriage of a Muslim male or female with an idol worshipper, therefore, is declared to be void

(iv) Marriage among Insanes and Minors—The marriage among insanes and the marriage of minors without the permission of the guardians are considered to be void among Muslims.

Muslim marriages contracted in the following circumstances are declared to be irregular :

(i) Marriage with Fifth women—Islam forbids marriage with a fifth women while the other four are alive Such a marriage, however, can be regularised by divorcing one of the former four wives *John Gunthur* has written that *"Ibn Sasud*, the founder of Saudi Arabia, used to divorce one of his four wives before going on a journey, so that he may be entitled to marry any woman he may like during the course of his journey. He thus married legally with at least 120 women "

(ii) Absence of Witnesses—Among the Suni Muslims the absence of witnesses in a marital contract makes it irregular. Among the Shia Muslims, however, the presence of witnesses is not considered to be necessary.

(iii) Marriage with followers of other religions—According to the Shia rule of marriage the bride and the bride-groom both must be Muslims in order to contract a valid Muslim marriage. But the temporary form of Muslim marriage known as Muta can be contracted even with those who respect the same scriptures such as the Jews, Christians and Parasees

The Procedure of Muslim Marriage—The proposal of marriage among the Muslims is made only when both the parties have enquired about one another and satisfied themselves The proposal of marriage should be made and accepted in the same meeting When both the parties have settled about the economic aspect of marriage, they decide some date to perform the marriage ceremony On this date the bride-groom offers the settled *'Mehar'* to the bride's party The consent of both the bride and the bride-groom is necessary to make a marital contract valid From the side of the bride some other person may also disclose her consent. Some adult person must be a witness to the contract of marriage

This witness, who is a relative of the bride's party, goes to 'the 'bride and asks 'her whether she gives 'him the right to settle her marriage with the man who is offering her 'Mehar'. He also narrates the complete description of the proposed bride-groom. If the bride gives her consent, the bridegroom and the witnesses are presented before the priest. When the bride gives her sanction the

witness tells the priest that he is the representative for the bride
The priest determines from the witness whether the bride is
consented to marry the bride-groom after the Mehar has been paid
When both the parties agree to the contract of marriage, the priest
recites certain Kalma and the marriage is considered to be finalised

Types of Muslim Marriage—According to Muslim Marriage Rules, the marriage are classified among the following three
types :

(1) Valid Marriages—Such a marriage is contracted by
following all prescribed rules and the birth of offspring from it is
considered to beleg it imate

(2) Void Marriages—A marriage whose basis is not legal
is called a void marriage It does not create any responsibilities of
legitimacy in the marriage contract

(3) Irregular Marriages—A marriage becomes irregular
whose its basis is sound but in which some formality has been left
unfulfilled If this formality is fulfilled after marriage it becomes
regular For example, the marriage with a fifth woman can be
regularised by divorcing one of the former four wives, the marriage
among the minor can be regularised by getting the permission of
their guardians and the marriage without witness can be
regularised by making someone witness to it even after marriage

Muta marriage—The Sunnis among Muslims admit only a
permanent form of marriage but Shias accept a temporary marriage
known as 'Muta' This type of marriage is contracted in two
conditions *Firstly* the settlement of the period of marriage which
may range from one day to several years and, *secondly* the
settlement about the quantity of 'Mehar' Of the two conditions the
former is more important The Muta marriage is valid if its period
has been fixed even if no Mehar has been settled, while the period
of its duration has not been fixed, the marriage remains
illegitimate Both male and female have a right to enter into Muta
marriage The woman cannot marry any non-Muslim while the
Muslim male can marry a Christian, a Jew or a Parasee woman
No one, however, has been permitted to contract this temporary
sort of marriage with a follower of any other religion Muta
marriage differs from the permanent type of marriage on the
following grounds .

' **(1) Succession**—The right of succession is secured only in
a permanent type of marriage and not in Muta marriage The sons
born through Muta marriage, however, are given a right to inherit
the property of both the parents

(2) Dissolution of marriage—A permanent Muslim marriage can be dissolved only through divorce. In Muta marriage the wife has no right to dissolve the marriage before the specified time limit while the husband can dissolve it whenever he wishes to do so The Sunnis do not accept Muta marriage. In actual practice it is very rare among Shias as well.

Option of Puberty—An important principle observed in Muslim marriage is the option of puberty. In India the age of puberty is considered to be 15 in thecae of male and 13 or 14 in the case of female when her menstruation begins. The Privy Council has decided the age of puberty to be 9 years for Shia girls. According to Hidaya, a Muslim scripture, the age of puberty is 12 and 9 in the case of boy and girl respectively. Before the age of puberty the boy and girl are considered to be minors and the sanction of their guardians is considered to be necessary for a valid marriage. In the case of such marriage the bride and the bride-groom can reject the contract after attaining the age of puberty. This option of rejecting the marital contract performed at the minor age is called the option of puberty in Muslim marriage. According to it if either the male or female refuses to accept the marital contract after attaining the age of puberty, it is considered as of the marriage never took place

'Mehar' or Dowry—As had already been pointed out, the Muslim married woman has a right to receive *'Mehar'* from her husband According to Muslim law, 'marriage' is a civil contract and 'Mehar' or dower is its necessary consequence. It is received by woman in exchange of her consent to be his wife. It is not bride price, but shows respect towards the wife.' The dower has been classified as follows·

1. Settled or definite dower—This is the dower which has been settled prior to marriage or on the occasion of it. It may vary from a few coins to several thousands of rupees It is settled by the mutual consent of both the parties of the bride and the bride-groom.

2. Meharul Misl—This is the dower which is not decided at the time of marriage, but after it at the instance of the wife.

3. Muwajjil Mehar—This is the 'bar 'Mehar' given by the husband to the wife immediately after marriage

4. Mehar after dissolution of marriage—This is the Mehar paid after dissolution of marriage either because of breaking of the marital contract or by the death of either spouse or in the case of divorce

Muslim Law of Divorce—Among Muslims the Law of Divorce is very rigid so far as the woman is concerned but it is easier for the male to divorce his wife The divorce is called the '*Talaqnama*' The oral divorce has been classified into the following types

1. Talaq-e-Ahsan—In this type of divorce if the husband pronounces the word 'talaq' once, the wife does not resume sexual relationship with him for a certain specified period which is normally of three months After the period divorce is accepted

2. Talaq-e-Hasan—In this type of divorce the husband pronounces the word 'talaq' three times during the period of two menstruations and in the period of third menstruation he does not enter into any sexual relationship with the wife After this period divorce is accepted as valid

3. Talaq-ul-widdat—In this type of divorce the husband pronounces the word 'talaq' three times during the period of one menstruation This divorce is irregular and it is regularised only after the completion of the time limit.

Formerly, the Muslim woman had no right to divorce her husband With the enactment of the Dissolution of *Muslim Marriage Act, 1939* she has a right to divorce her husband under the following circumstances

1 If the husband cannot be traced anywhere for the last four years

2 If the husband is unable to meet the expenses of the wife for at least two years.

3 If the husband gets the punishment of imprisonment for seven years or more.

4. If the husband is unable to enter into sexual relationship with or without a reasonable cause.

5. If the husband is impotent.

6 If the husband is mad

7 If the husband behaves cruelly with the wife

8 If the husband is insane or suffering from leprosy or virulent venereal diseases for the last two years.

The following are the other methods of the dissolution of a Muslim marriage :

1. 'Jihar'—In this the husband compares his wife with some near relative whom he cannot marry. For example, if the husband compares his wife with his mother, he cannot enter into sexual relationship with her, unless he repents for this comparison and if he fails to do so the wife can divorce him

2. Ila—In this the husband swearing by God, promises not to enter into sexual relationship with his wife for four months or more. Now, if the husband follows his promise for the specified period, the marriage is no more prevalent in Muslim society.

3. Liyan—If a husband impose a false charge of adultery on the wife, the wife prays to the court that the husband be ordered to take back his charge. And if the husband fails to do so the marriage is dissolved. If the husband and wife both accuse each other of the charge of adultery, their marriage is considered to be dissolved.

4. Khula—In this the wife asks her husband to set her free from the bonds of marriage in exchange of some amount of money from her. If the husband accepts his wife's request, the marriage is dissolved by mutual consent.

5. Mubar-at—This type of dissolution of marriage also occurs by mutual consent, but in it the wife as not to pay any money to the husband.

Inspite of the enactment of the dissolution of Muslim Marriage Act, 1939, there is much inequality in this respect between the Muslim wife and husband. It is only when this inequality is removed then the Muslim woman can attain an equal status with her husband in society.

Comparison of Hindu-muslim Marriage Systems

The following are the similarities among Hindu and Muslim marriage systems ·

1. Permission of polygamy to males—The scriptures of both the Hindus and the Muslims allow the male to marry several times, though among the Muslims this concession is more liberal According to Hindu scriptures, a man can marry a second time with the consent of his wife for getting, a male progeny But among the Muslims no particular cause of marriage or consent of wife is required in the case of four marriages at the same time and the fifty marriage can always be regularised by simply divorcing either of the former four wives. The Hindu scriptures do not permit such polygamy without restriction. According to *'Apastamb Dharmasutra'*, à male guilty of deserting his wife without any reason should be made to wear the skin of a donkey for six months. But in practice in medieval times there were hardly any restrictions

4. Distinction in Dowry and Mehar—Among Hindus there is the custom of dowry which is very much different from the custom of Mehar found among the Muslims. While dowry is given from the bride's party to the bride-groom and the bride has no right in it, mehar is given from the bride-groom to the bride's party and the bride has the sole right over it. While dowry is given only on the occasion of marriage, mehar can be given even after marriage has been solemnized. And normally it is only settled on the occasion of marriage. But now-a-days, the demand of dowry and mehar is increasing beyond limits so that both in the Hindu and Muslim communities reformers are trying to eliminate its custom

5. Provisions of Temporary Marriage—While there is no provision of a temporary marriage among Hindus, in Shia Muslims there is a provision for a temporary marriage known as 'Muta'.

6. Rules about Widow Marriage—Formerly, there was no provision for widow remarriage in Hindu society and even now when it is legally accepted, in practice no one likes to marry a widow Among the Muslims, on the other hand, widow remarriage is a normal feature In the case of widow remarriage among Hindus there is no provision like the rule of Iddat as found among the Muslims.

Change in Hindu Marriage

Among the Hindus, marriage is generally considered as obligatory for every person because, in the first place, the birth of a son is said to enable one to obtain Moksa According to *Prabhu*, "Marriage is one of the sacrament sanctifying the body through each of which every man and woman must pass at the proper age and time" Manu considers it as a social institution for the regulation of proper relations between the sexes

Traditionally the institution of marriage in India has had four characteristics which are important for the stability of the joint family These are (1) pre-pubertal marriage, (2) marriage within the sub-caste group (3) marriage by arrangement in contrast to marriage by mutual choice of the boy and girl concerned, and (4) Prohibition of widow remarriage

(i) Change in Pre-Pubertal Marriage—Of the three rules mentioned above, at least two have been modified by law. Early marriage was prohibited by the Child Marriage Restraint Act of 1929 This act fixed the minimum age of marriage of a girl at 14

year This did not alter practice, at any rate in the rural areas But the act made it possible for an interested person to prevent a marriage where the girl was below fourteen years of age, by bringing it to the notice of appropriate authorities

According to *M S Gore*, "The lengthening of the period of education, and the relative uncertainty about the future occupational and economic status of a young man would tend to exercise pressures, for a higher age of marriage for man and consequently also for women" National Sample Surveys also show that the age of marriage has shown a tendency to rise for the country as a whole, and more particularly for the urban areas With regard to the attitude towards the appropriate age of a girl for marriage there has been a change by way of reverting to what was prevalent in the 1930s *Merchant* in his study (1933) had found that on an average young woman favoured marriage at the age of 19 7 years *Promila Kapur* in her study (1973) had found that while in 1959 a majority of calculated working woman thought that the most suitable age for a girl get married was between 20 and 24 in any age between 18 and 22 was considered as the most suitable by the majority of women At the same time their attitude with regard to the upper age limit for marriage for girls had liberalized a lot in ten years This is evidenced by a much greater number of these women expressing after ten years that 'any age' after 18 or 20 is suitable for marriage Various studies point out that the majority of educated women accept the traditional belief that the bride should be younger than bridegroom *Kapur* in her study (1973) found that a greater majority of educated working women preferred the husband to be older than the wife. Yet, the change in their attitudes with regard to age-difference was noted on two sources Firstly, ten years earlier a majority of them preferred the husband to be seven to ten years older than the wife, whereas ten years later they favoured the husband to be only two to seven years older. Secondly, in ten years the percentage of these women had increased who thought that age difference was immaterial and that it did not matter whether the husband was 2 to 12 years older or younger than the wife provided he was a man of her choice. This also points towards a trend in the liberalization of attitude towards age-difference between husband and wife The study of *Krish namurty* (1970) also indicates this trend

(ii) **Change in Marriage within the Sub-caste Group**—
Traditionally, among the Hindus marriage is possible within the framework of the caste system only The attitudes of educated

middle class women have changed towards the traditional constraint of marriage to be within one's own caste, province, and religion within a period of ten years, the percentage of these women who either approved or did not mind inter-caste and inter-provincial marriage for others, for relatives and for themselves had risen considerably. This change in their attitudes had started since 1917 according to the study of *Kunna* (1963) but there has been more rapid change after 1946. The study of *Ghurye* (1950) of educated men and women, of educated females, of *Kapadia* (1958) of the university graduates and of the *Krishnamurty* (1970) of the post-graduate women students point towards the increasing approval of inter-caste marriage among the educated middle class people. Promila Kapur in her study (1973) had found that attitude towards inter-religious and inter racial marriage was found to have broadened a lot even within ten years. However, as far as the approval of these marriages was concerned their attitude had not changed much. Almost as may approved of them later as they did ten years earlier. Krishnamurty in his study of post graduate women students of Andhra University also found that even now inter-religion marriage were not favoured by 65 percent of them. However, 26 per cent were found to be favouring them which is again an indication of the change trend in the traditional attitudes M S Gore in his study had found that the higher the level of education, the lower was the proportion of respondents opposed to inter-caste marriage. Also fewer urban respondents and male respondents were opposed to inter-caste marriage than non-urban and women respondents respectively

(iii) **Change in Marriage by Arrangement**—*M S Gore* in his study had found that urban residence and education were directly related to the proportion of respondents who considered it important that the person getting married should be consulted in the choice of his spouse. 152 out of 407 married teachers in *Kapadia's* study claim that they had selected their own partners though, as Kapadia points out, 90 percent had consulted their parents had guardians in making the choice. In Ross study 5 of the 43 married women respondents said that they had complete freedom in selecting their own husbands and 2 out of 13 married men gave the same response Jyoti Barot in his study had found that 88 percent of men and 83 8 percent of the women were involved in the decision making process and their consent was sought Merchant in his study (1935) had found that nearly 78 per cent of women supported marriage by choice In *Hate study* (1946) 74 per

cent of the educated female respondents reported the same Mathew in her study (1966) of the attitudes of the college students towards marriage also found that 64 per cent of the girl students preferred marriage arranged by the parents with the whole hearted approval of the boy and the girl *Krishnamurty* in his study (1970) found that 82 percent of the students pursuing higher education in Andhra University wanted their own involvement along with parents in the process of mate selection Mehta's study (1970) of the western educated Hindu women also indicates similar findings

(iv) Change in Prohibition of Widow Remarriage—*M S Gore* in his study had found that most respondents sum willing to break with tradition in permitting a widow to remarry Only 18 per cent of the 1274 respondents said that they were against widow remarriage Kapadia in his study had found that 90 percent of the persons inter-viewed were in favour of widow remarriage *Promila Kapur* in her study had found that attitude towards widow remarriage was also found to have liberalized a lot in the years This is indicated by the fact that a much higher percentage of these women expressed the opinion that widow could marry at any age and under any circumstances if she herself felt like marrying owing to various emotional or physical needs

(v) Changing Attitude towards Divorce—The studies of *Alteker*(1962), *Kapata* (1970) and *Gore* (1968) point out that the Hindu religious sentiment since the period of Dharm Sutras (B C 600 300) has been definitely against the dissolution of marriage with the change in the concept of marriage a change has also occurred in the attitude towards its dissolution or divorce Though in ten years the percentage of those women who approved of a woman's divorcing her husband had remained almost the same and majority of them did not approve of divorce at both points of time, the range of the reasons or of the circumstances under which they approved or did mind divorce and remarriage of divorce women had considerably widened Ten years earlier most of the women who favoured divorce for women had approved it only on such grounds of ill treatment cruelty, or bad character of the husband, that is only under unavoidable and unbearable circumstances Ten years later, however, the percentage of these women had increased considerably who did not mind or approved of a women's dissolving the marriage even under such circumstances as "husband and wife not being compatible" "They are not being able to pull on well together." "Their being completely dissatisfied with each other " or "Their having absolutely no love for each other " Gore in his study

had found that 84 per cent were against the provision for divorce,
2 percent were in favour of such a provision, 11 percent were
conditionally in favour and 2 percent gave no reply out of 1970
respondents In his study Ross had found that only 20 percent
respondents (women 65) were wholly against the idea of divorce
Of the men, eleven out of 66, (20 percent) were against divorce
Kuppuswamy in his study had found that about 50 percent of his
respondents would seen to favour dissolution

(vi) Changing Attitude towards Marriage—The increas-
ing emerging notion that marriage is a social contract has also
changed that ideas with regard to the very content of marriage
According to *Promila Kapur*, the change in their answers to the
questions as to why they wished to get married is very vital for
finding out their changing attitudes Ten years earlier, out of the
reasons given by them, the highest frequency was found to be of
reasons such as 'for social status and to adhere to tradition and
culture,', 'for social security', 'for physical security', 'need for,
belonging to a husband, home and children', 'to fulfil ones' sacred
and social duty' and 'mutual love' But ten years later the reasons
most frequently put forward were for mutual companionship for
materal comforts', 'for the satisfaction of emotional and physical
needs' and 'for possessing a husband, home and children' This
shows that the prevalence of the attitude that marriage is entered
into for personal gains is now greater than before It her study
Barol (1972) came out with similar findings when she pointed out
that in the attitudes of modern women the emphasis had shifted
from self sacrifice to satisfaction in marriage This is further
indicated by more and more of these women expressing the view
that in settling a marriage the interests and considerations of the
young people should be given more weight than those ,of the
families This certainly reveals an increasing departure from the
traditional criteria of marriage settlement in India

Problems Relating to Marriage

Different communities have different marital problems We
can consider these problems under two categories First we will
consider the marital problems of the Indian society and then those
of the western industrial society

1. Indian society—Various forms, customs and conventions
of marriage are prevalent in India based on religion, castes, tribe
and region Still there are certain problems that concern the

majority of Indian population In many parts of India for example, in the Hindi speaking areas, child marriage is prevalent among both the Hindus and Muslims Gradually the number of marriage at a very early age decreased considerably but the custom of child-marriage still persists in some form or other LEgally the marriage of a woman of minimum eighteen years and that of a man of twenty-one is valid But in the rural areas of India, particularly north India, the law is generally ignored This affects the health of the couples, and also the health and education of the *children*

Another problem connected with marriage is that of hyper gamy and mis match among Muslims in which the age gap between the husband and the wife is quite big This fact is also responsible for the lack of familial harmony, lack of procreation and widowhood Another marital problem is concerned with polygamous marriages Because of Islamic personal law, tribal economy and the customs prevalent in rural Hindu community polygamy is still practised The polygamous marriage is diminishing too Economic factors, law and modern education are behind the decreasing influence of polygamous types of marriage

Indian marriage is plagued by yet another problem It is the problem of dowry Excepting the tribal communities and states like Assam, the groom's family in almost all parts of India expects dowry from the bride's family before or after the marriage, in the form of cash or kind, directly or indirectly The dowry system has assumed the proportion of a social disease It has disintegrated our social system so much so that we often expect dowry This is perpetuating in spite of increasing education, new means of employment and urbanisation The efforts of the conscientious people of society social reformers, and women's liberation groups have led to the forming of anti dowry law But even the law has not been able to contain the greed of dowry-demanding people

The institutions of the family and marriage are directly concerned with man-woman relationship and their social condition It is true that the expansion of education, new opportunities of employment, urbanisation, the influence of the independence movement, marriage, succession and anti dowry law have done a lot towards improving women's status in the Indian society In India women are quite adverred in the fields of rural economy, handicrafts modern occupat ons and professions such as medicine, engineering, journalism, film, literature and politics It has func tionally affected their marital and familial life also But in spite

of all this a large number of women are still in the clutches of
purdah system, superstitions, dowry system and unequal matches
The influence of the western countries, modern education and
industrialisation have led to the development of the individualistic
ideology in India As a result of this love marriages, nuclear and
small family norm are being emphasised Individual attraction now
plays an important role in fixing marriages in cities But the role
of the family and parents is still very important in Indian
marriages

2. **Western Society**—The industrial countries have their
own problems The individualistic ideology, rapid industrialisation,
metropolitan culture and the two world wars have meaningfully
changed the social structure of Europe and North America The
norms of man woman relationship developed by the medieval social
values have weakened because of modern values As a result,
adolescents lead an independent life Marriage is based on love
and mutual attraction The control of the family and parents have
weakened Anonymity of the urban culture, movements of women's
liberation and the increasing economic independence ,of women
have disintegrated sexual taboos Now in the western society
nobody objects to pre marital relationship, pre-marital children and
man and woman living together without getting married All this
has resulted into the weakening of the family and marriage as a
group and as an institution The stability of the husband-wife
relationship has converted into tensions and the rate of divorce
has gone up

Sociologists have tried to express the increasing tensions of
marital relationship by calling it marital disintegration, marital
instability, and so on Johnson has considered the reasons of the
increasing divorce rate According to him at the root of the
increasing number of divorce are religious and legal tolerance
towards divorce, growth of industrialisation, urbanisation, birth
control facilities, increasing social and physical mobility and the
diversity of population

6

MAJOR RELIGIONS
OF INDIA
INSTITUTIONS & FUNCTIONING

Religion is related to the mysteries of human existence For centuries man has been intrigued by questions such as why and how this world was created and what death is Various religions have answered these questions in their own way Religion is the human response to the apprehension of some thing, or power, which is supernatural and suprasensory It is the expression of the manner, and type, of adjustment effected by a people with their conception of the supernatural Religion had been regarded as a *product of civilization until* Tylor gave convincing proof that primitive societies have their own versions of religious activity, not very different from that of civilized societies Ever since Tylor's views were published no ethnographer has reported any primitive society without religious beliefs and practices

Sociology, right from the time of its origin, has endeavoured to make a scientific study of religion **Auguste Comte** has considered the religious stage as the beginning stage in his "Law of Three Stages" Comte believed that even in the modern scientific age the work of social restructuring would be based on the *principles of religion and morality On the others* hand, **Karl Marx** holds that religion is an ideology but it is the opium of the masses It destroys their consciousness On the contrary **Durkheim, Max Weber** and **Parsons** have considered the functional role of religion and its contribution towards social solidarity As an institution religion plays an important role in society Religion imparts beliefs and patterns of behaviour

Meaning & Definition of Religion

From the etymological point of view, Bouquet has shown, religion is derived from the Latin word *religio,* which itself is derived from either the root *leg* , which means 'to gather, count or observe', or from the root *lig* which means 'to gather', count or observe', or from the root lig-which means 'to bind' In the former sense the implication is belief in, and observation of , signs of Divine Communication In the latter sense the implication is the performance of necessary actions which may bind together man and the super natural powers that be

A number of sociologists have defined the concept of religion

Gillin and **Gillin** writes 'Cultural Sociology' that "The social field ' of religion may be regarded as including those emotionalized beliefs prevalent in a social group concurring the supernatural plus crest and behaviour, material objects and symbols associated with such beliefs "

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Christophere Dauson writes that "Whenever and wherever man has a sense of dependence on external powers which are conceived as mysterious and higher than man's own, there is religion and feeling of awe and self-abusement with which man is filled in the presence of such powers, is essentially a religion, the root of worship and prayer."

Maciverr and page writes in 'society'—"Religion, as we understand the term, implies a relationship between man and man but also between man and some higher power. Hence, it normally invokes a sanction which may be called *Supra* social, whether it be primitive ghost fear or the present 'worth of God' or the penalties on and after life of torture in hell or merely the sense of being out of the tune with the infinite when its supposed laws are disobeyed."

According to Emile Durkheim religion is the unified system of beliefs and practices related to sacred things Those who have common beliefs and practices are united into the one single moral community through religion. Thus in his views on religion, Durkheim describes both the basic elements of the structure of religion and its functions According to him the structure of religion has the following basic elements

1 Sacred objects
2 Beliefs and practices
3 Followers/adherents
4. A moral community

Nature, human being, place or object may be taken as examples of concrete form of super natural power while discourses and philosophical thinking may be its abstract forms We would like to restate that the concept of social solidarity is crucial in Durkheims' sociology Accordingly religion strengthens social solidarity Religion as an institution has certain common elements These elements as given below are found in both primitive and the modern organised religions:

1 Belief in a supernatural power
2 This supernatural power may be concrete in the form of nature, a human being, place or objector it maybe abstract in the form of discourses and philosophical thinking
3 Followers having faith in this supernatural power.
4 Mode of worship

5 Liturgy

6 The concept of a supernatural place (heaven and hell) ;

7 Ideology

8 Place of worship

Origin of Religion

Sociologists and anthropologists believe that the primitive man's imagination born out of fear and insecurity, mode of worship, beliefs and liturgy are instrumental in development of modern organised religion

A number of theoretical perspectives have discussed to understand the origin of religion Few of the more—

Animism

The earliest anthropological theory about primitive region, seeking to trace its origins and explain it, was given by Tylor He said that although the origin appears to be multiple, yet there is only one idea underlying it, viz , belief in the soul (*anima*), hence the name *animism* for this theory

Tylor's conjectural arguments ran as follows Primitive man had certain experiences, in his dreams he engaged in various types of activities even while he was sleeping; he met his dead ancestors in dreams nad had hallucinatory experiences about them,and other beings, while he was awake, he heard the echoes of his own voice; he saw his own reflection in ponds, pools and rivers, and he failed to disentangle himself from his shadow Even while he was having these understandable (to him, experiences, something of a much deeper import must also have happened periodically and set the primitive man's mind thinking people must have died This catastrophe must have been a great intellectual challenge What had really happened which had suddenly put an end to a persons' actions, verbal and non-verbal ? He looked the same, but was not the same There must have been some unseen thing in him which must have escaped, unseen, making him dead It was thus that the belief in such an unseen thing, or power, which kept people a've when it was in them, and made them dead when it left their bodies, emerged Such a thing, or power, is called 'soul'. But how was it that sleep, so very like death, was not death, and how was

it that people had all these various experiences in dreams, and while awake, heard echoes and saw shadows and reflections ? Certainly, Tylor says, primitive man must have thought there must be two souls in a human being, a free soul which could go out of him and have experiences, and a body soul which if it left the body resulted in its death. The former may have been associated with and represented by breath and shadow, the latter by blood and head. Primitive man must have come to the conclusion that when the body soul left the body permanently, the person concerned died, and his soul became a ghost or spirit. The soul must have obviously appeared to be immortal because they could dream about people who had been long dead. The uncertainty whether the souls has left the body temporarily or permanently may be a reason for the practice of double funeral, a 'green' one and a 'dry' one, found among some contemporary primitive peoples of India and elsewhere. The first, green funeral, takes place immediately after death and the second, dry funeral, is observed after the lapse of some days when all hopes of the return of the soul are given up, and the second funeral is often the occasion for the more important ceremony, e g, among the Toda and the Ho. The Ho call it the *jangtopa*, when drums beat, *topam jangtopam*, they celebrate the union of the spirit with the impersonal force which they know as banga. Among the Kota the green funeral is called *pasdau* and takes place shortly after actual death has taken place. The second dry funeral, called *varldau*, is held some time later and for all those whose demise has taken place since the last dry funeral. The dry funeral symbolizes the complete severance of connexion between the dead and this world, and their entry into the other world.

So, Tylor believed that an attitude of awe and reverence towards these intangible and non-material spiritual beings forms the core of the earliest form of primitive religion. These spiritual beings are not under our control and have, therefore, to be propitiated lest they should do harm, and in order that they may render help. Thus ancestor worship was the earliest form of worship and tombs the earliest temples. Animism consists of such a belief in the role of spiritual beings in human life, it is a kind of polytheism. Tylor believed that in course of time there was evolutionary development in religious beliefs and forms, and the progress was from polytheism towards monotheism.

It has been complained that Tylor made a philosopher and a rationalist out of primitive man, which he certainly is not, and must never have been Tylor had no field experience and did not know that primitive man lives an active life and is not given so much to thinking as his theory postulated Instead, he observes life and nature and participates in it, he does not rationalize about it Consequently, other explanations were sought for But it was no suggested that Tylor's theory was wholly wrong It over-emphasized one aspect of primitive religion, viz , the belief in soul and spirits Tylor's evolutionary sequence leading from polytheism to monotheism has, however, found no proof and therefore not many adherents

Animatism and Manaism

Tylor's earliest critics said that animism is a later develop ment in the history of religion They postulated a pre-animistic stage when religious belief supposedly consisted mainly in the belief that everything has life and is animate Prominent among these writers were Preuss and Max Muller The latter's name is associated with the theory of *naturism*, given below

More recently,Marett evolved a special form of animatist theory which he called *manaism* Marett said that the entire religious life of the primitives born out of their belief in a certain understandable, impersonal, non material, and unindividualized supernatural power which takes abode in all the objects, animate and inanimate, that exist in the world It lies more or less beyond the reach of the senses, but is manifested as physical force or such other excellences as man can think of in himself, others and also in objects around him It may differ in intensity, the degree in which it is present in a person or an object, but in essence it is always the same Such a set of beliefs Marett called *animatism* or *manaism* after the term *mana* used by Melanesians to designate this force Majumdar's description and analysis of the conception of *banga* among the Ho (given below) falls in line with Marett's theory of primitive religion Some North American tribes call this power orenda It is elsewhere known as aren and *uakua*

But even this explanation is open, to some extent, to the main criticism leveled against Tylor,viz , that it invests the · primitive with an aptitude for thinking and rationalization which he does not actually possess

Naturism

Reference has been already made to the German theory of *naturism* associated with Max Muller He said that the earliest form of religion must have been the worship of objects of nature; and evidence in support of such a view has come in from archaeological excavations conducted in Egypt and elsewhere It is maintained that an attitude of an or love and reverence towards objects of nature is born as a result of a 'diseased' mind which invests lifeless things with life and all the power that is associated with life This error of mind is, according to this theory, born out of defective language. Such linguistic errors as the sun *rises* and *sets*, or thunder *sends* rain, or that trees *bear* flowers and fruit, give rise to beliefs in some power inherent in the sun, thunder, trees, etc

So far as it is maintained that objects of nature were worshipped, no difficulty arises; evidence in favour of such a practice is heavy But any claim to such worship being the earliest form of religion, or the explanation given, is not convincing There is no proof to show that various conceptions follow linguistic expressions about the same On the contrary, linguistic expressions may follow certain already existent ideas

The merit and usefulness of these various theories emerges when they are taken together, as each of them expresses some essential truth regarding primitive religion.

Functional

Durkheim criticises these theories of the origin of religion According to Durkheim these theories project primitive man as philosopher whereas Durkheim feels that their ideas and social life were too simple Secondly these theories stress on psychological aspects while for Durkheim religious beliefs are totally social He criticises the earlier sociologists and anthropologists on the grounds that their explanations for religion are psychological, sociological and that they made religion an illusion whereas nothing so universal and important in human society could be illusory. Durkheim argues that in all societies a distinction is made between 'sacred' and 'profane' objects Religion related and sacred objects Individuals collecting at religious rituals and festivals strengthen their solidarity and fills them with a social spirit

Later anthropologists, particularly Malinowski and Radcliffe Brown, have conducted field studies as to how religion functions in primitive societies According to them, religion maintains social harmony and controls individual's behaviour Malinowski points out, with reference to the Trobriand Islanders, that religion is intimately connected with various emotional states, which are states of tension For example, quite a few of their magical and religious practices centre round the fishing expeditions These are the outcome of the state of fear which a possible disaster on the seas give rise to Similarly, hate, greed, anger, love, etc , may arise due to various situations in a man's life These situations create stresses and strains and, if permitted to exist over a long period of time, frustrate all action A human being has to be an acting individual, and normal action is not possible in an emotionally upset state of existence Religion is made use of in such a situation as a tool of adaptation, its purpose is to purge the human mind of its stress and strain, i e , it is cathartic in its action In other words, religion has the function of bringing about a readjustment between man and the supernatural in upset states of existence It is a device to secure mental and psychical stability in an individual's life

Radcliffe-Brown *takes a different stand* The function of religion, he says, is not to purge fear and other emotional strains from the human mind, but to instil a sense of dependence in it He says that, ultimately, the survival of the group is more important than that of the individual and if the latter has to make some sacrifices it is in his own interest to do so, because without social survival individual survival is not possible However, the individual does not seem to real size this always, and he seeks to chart out an individual course of action If each individual were to do this there would be utter confusion and chaos and no organized activity would be possible Adherence to a norm of behaviour is essential in terms of social survival,and it is the fear of supernatural control and punishment, as also the anticipation of support in the case of socially approved conduct, that brings about this adherence Therefore, the function of religion is to create a twofold feeling of dependence on society and thereby obtain the individual's concurrence with the social norms,the ultimate aim being social survival The function of religion is the contribution it makes to that total activity which is designed to perpetuate society

Here again, we may say, that the truth lies in a conjunction of the views of Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown. Their viewpoints might appear opposed, but they are not, they have to be taken as complementary. The individual is as important to society as society is to the individual.

Structure of Different Religions

There are a number of religions in modern time. Prominent among them are Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Confucianism, Buddhism, and Judaism. Apart from these religions, India has Sikhism, Jainism and Zoroastrianism. All these religions have their own system of beliefs and modes of worship. Religion also has system of thought. Each religion has its own organizational structure. Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Judaism are religions which have prophets. The basic assumptions of all prominent religions are collected in some philosophical texts. Hindus have the Vedas, Christians the Bible and Islam the Holy Kuran.

Apart from propounders of each religion, belief and ideology, place of worship, institutionalised forms of sacrament, scriptures and mythology are also important components of religion.

Like polity and economy religion also incorporates various activities. Sacrament is an important religious activity which is generally associated with sacred objects. It aims at achieving this worldly and the other worldly goals, therefore, it is important to observe sacrament in a proper manner. Sacraments are always observed in order to achieve certain goals. Therefore, it may also have utilitarian objectives.

In Hinduism there are various sacraments which are observed from birth till death. Important amongst these are conception, christening (naming ceremony), thread ceremony, marriage and the last rites. CAtholics also emphasize sacraments namely baptism, ordination and marriage, etc. However, Protestants have liberal attitude towards these sacraments. Islam also lays stress on sacraments.

The beliefs and ideals of each religion are symbolically expressed in the mythological stories also. There are mythological stories connected with creation, annihilation and the origin of man in Hinduism.

The ideals and values of Hinduism have been symbolically expressed through the Puranas concerned with *Brahama*, *Vishnu* *Shiva*, *Rama* and *Krishna* Similarly, Christianity also has many mythological stories connected with 'The Last Supper',Christ's birth, his crucifixion and his teachings Islam also has many mythological stories about the ideas and activities of the Prophet, and the propagation and struggle of Islam Through mythological stories the social ideals and norms and handed down from one generation to another so that people improve knowledge of their tradition, values and morals Max Weber has especially studied structures and theological bases of the Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Confucianism, Judaism, Catholicism and Protestantism Weber believes that except Protestantism all the other religions have laid special stress on religious practices These religions also have other worldly views Therefore, this worldly views were not considered important in these religions

On the contrary Protestantism does not emphasize orthodox religious practices because it incorporated this worldly point of view The adherent of Protestant ethics believes that doing one's duty means serving God It emphasizes the importance of time labour and money Owing to these traits of Protestantism some European countries witnessed growth of capitalism

Religious Organisation

All religions have some organisational forms which may be classified on the following bases

1 Nature of membership   compulsory or voluntary
2 The membership of voluntary religious groups is governed by sets of rules and regulations
3 The attitude of religious groups towards other religious groups which may be liberal or conservative
4 Imperative conversion or the lack of it
5 *The organisation of the religious group may be liberal or rigid*
6 The role of priest is required or not for attaining this worldly *or the other worldly goods*

From the viewpoint of organisation within Christianity the Roman Catholic religion is the most organised group The head of all the Roman Catholic Churches in the world is the Pope who lives in the Vetican city (Rome) This organisation has hierarchical

order starting from the world level church to the local church. The Hindu religion is just the opposite to this as it has no organised hierarchy

Sects

Sects are important from the point of view of religion. The sect is a religious group that revolts against the prevalent conventions The sect develops a new system of thought that is independent of conventional religion and morality, and claims to have divine order for it The origin of sect is associated with social discontment One may find many sects in the same religion

The Hindu religion has six systems of thought. The followers of these six systems form six sects Later on these divisions incorporated mode of worship Accordingly they worshipped Gods, for example, Shaiva (worshipers of Lord Shiva), Vaishnava (worshipers of Lord Vishnu), and Shakta (worshipers of the Goddess Durga), etc The medieval social reform movements resulted in many sects of Hinduism such as Natha Panth, Kabir Panth, Nanak Panth, Udasi and so on The nineteenth century social reform movements gave rise to Brahma Samaj, Radhaswami sect, the Aryasamaj, etc Besides, the adherents of conventional Hinduism, consider themselves Sanatanis Sects established by Swami Vivekanand, Ramakrishna, Maharashi Raman, Maharashi Arvind and Sai Baba have their centres Christianity also has many sects Methodist, Baptist and Anglican sects There are two divisions within Christianity—the Catholic and the Protestant The Shiya and the Sunni are the two important sects within Islam.

A comparative study of religion and the sect shows that the membership of religion is generally compulsory and ascribed by birth while sects generally work as voluntary groups The membership of these groups depends on the individual's wish Sects are based on brotherhood, common goals and principles of equality In spite of intolerance towards other religious groups the organisation within sects is generally democratic.

New sects come into existence because of the desire to minimise the weaknesses of the conventional religion and changes according to new circumstances Loyalty to one's own sect and the feeling of conflict and resentment towards other sects strengthens the unity amongst the members of the sect. With the passage of time when feeling of resistance weakens, sect gradually becomes an accepted panth

The process of adjustment and reciprocity goes on constantly among various sects, panths, and religions In India Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism influenced each other in ancient times This adjustment resulted in the propagation of the Sufism and the rise of Kabir and Sikh Panth The social structures of the Hindu religion viz. the caste system widely influenced the adherents of Buddhism, Jainism and Islam Later on Indians came into contact with Christianity Its influence can be seen in the nineteenth century reform movements such as Brahmo Samaj, Prarthana Samaj and Rama Krishna Mission

Religions in India

According to the 1931 census there were ten religious groups in India These were Hindus, Jains, Buddhists, Zoroastrians, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Jews and other tribal and non-tribal religious groups The census of 1961 listed only seven religious categories Hindus, Jains, Buddhists, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs and other religions and persuasions Religion is really a complex phenomenon in India For example, elements of Sanskritic and tribal religion are found in a mixed form at various levels So is the interaction between the 'great' and the 'little' traditions Integration of Sanskritic Hindu religion and tribal religion is also found M N Srinivas examines the role of religion in social integration as a binding force amongst individuals and groups However, it is more important to see how religion does this how it functions Karl Marx's dictum, "religion is the opiate of the masses", can be found true if religion becomes a tool of exploitation in the hands of a selected few who claim themselves its custodians and protectors Srinivas, however, considers religious behaviour as a part of social life He refers to three points (1) the relations between different castes and religious groups at the village and other local levels, (2) the general role of religion in the economic development of the country and (3) religion and socio economic privileges

Multi-religious villages are not as conspicuous a phenomenon as multi-caste villages in India However, in Uttar Pradesh one can find Hindu tenants and Muslim landlords and vice versa In Rampura village in Karnataka, a few big Hindu landowners had Muslim tenants and servants, while Muslim landowners had Hindu servants The Muslims were engaged in a variety of economic activities, as they did not own much land The Hindus owned mango orchards, but the Muslims carried on the trade Hindus and

Muslims inter acted on several occasions, including festivals and weddings When a particular religious community has specialized in any economic field, its clientele belongs to various other religions

In cities, Hindus and Muslims have been greeting each other on their festive occasions In situations of riots and crises, they have come to each other's rescue. In the riots of November 1984 in Delhi and other places a large number of Sikhs were given Shelter and protection by Hindus. Sikhs and Hindus have lived in amity in the Punjab for centuries

There is an association between religious communities and specific economic functions they perform For example, Parsis are in the liquor trade Moplah traders are found in Kerala, Mysore, Madras and Bombay Jain traders are found in Bombay, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Karnataka and Bengal Such an association is found even at the village level From among the Hindus, Gujrati Banias, Telugu Komatis, Tamil Chettiars and Rajasthani Banias have played a particularly important role in economic activities However, several new caste groups have entered into commerce and trade Caste barriers have weakened, and spatial mobility in greater The spread of various communities all over the country and diversification of their economic activities have strengthened the process of social integration

The sociologist Max Weber was the first to mention a Hindu ethic consisting of the principles of *samsara* (belief in the trans migration of souls) and karma (doctrine of compensation) These two principles together formed the basis of the caste system. Consequent upon this, according to Weber, caste system did not have a this-worldly rational ethic Weber based his analysis on extrapolation of textual notions of Hinduism. Weber perhaps looked *at the traditionalism and irrationality of Hinduism from the point of view of the protestant ethic and its relationship with the growth of capitalism* in his own society

Milton Singer has found religious/ideological bases of the varna-*jati* order, sects and tribalism and their relationship with the processes of modernisation, nationalism, industralisation and bureaucracy However, it would be quite absurd to draw the conclusion that the Hindu ethic and caste system contribute to economic development in a positive way, and that there is, therefore, no need to change these systems This view only explains the resilient character of Hinduism and the caste system vis-a-vis changes in India's economy and polity.

Hinduism is not a static religion It has changed considerably due to the spread of scientific knowledge, technological advancement, improved means of communication and the process of secularism Hinduism remains a complex phenomenon, despite changes due to these factors At the pan-Indian level, education, the mass media, the press, and migration have promoted secular values However, at the local level, religious practices remain unaffected to a large extent

India has been characterised as a "primary" or "orthogenetic" civilisation, because it has its continuity, an uninterrupted history despite foreign invasions and wars between rulers within the country The main source of strength of the Indian civilisation is the interaction between different parts of its tradition The traditions which are written, find a place in Hindu or Islamic literature, religious texts and scripts These are called "great traditions" The ones which are unwritten and transmitted orally from one generation to another are called 'little traditions' These two are constantly interacting with each other When the elements of a great tradition filter down to the people, the process of such a spread is known as *parochialisation* When the elements of a little tradition become a part of a great (sanskritic) tradition, the process is described as *universalisation* To call a tradition great or little, in fact, amounts to designating people as great and little, because it is the people who are literate or unlettered Traditions refer to norms of behaviour and inter personal relations They are symbiotic in nature, but their hierarchy refers to a hierarchy of human beings To call illiterate folks little and the literate great, even by implication, would involve a value judgment Thus, religion is a very complex phenomenon It is necessary to simplify it by clarifying those canons which put all the believers on the same wave-length without any discrimination whatsoever based on caste, region, cultural heritage, economic position, educational status, etc

Religious Reform Movements in India

There were several socio cultural, mainly religious problems which demanded mass mobilisation, awakening and action against British Raj, Feudals and upper sections of society

A.R. Desai considers religious reforms movements an expression of national awakening due to contradictions between the old value systems and new socio economic realities The aim

of these movements was to revive the old religion in the context
of nationalism and democracy as the cardinal principles for the
emergence of modern India Desai writes "Modern society estab-
lished in India by the British conquest was a capitalist society
resting on the principles of individual liberty, freedom of competi-
tion, contract, and freedom of the individual to own and manipulate
property at will In dividualism was its keynote in contrast to the
pre-capitalist society which was authoritarian in character, main-
tained social distinctions based on birth and sex, and subordinated
the individual to caste and the joint family system The new society
demanded, as the very condition of its development, the abolition
of privileges based on birth or sex " The reform movements were
against medievalism in socio cultural realms The attacked the
caste system and its allied institutions, polytheism, superfluous
religious rites and dogmas "These religio-reform movements were
national in content but religious in form " Besides the Brahmo
Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Ramakrishna Mission, and the Servants
of India Society, we will also briefly discuss several other
movements, including the Theosophical Society, reform movements
among Muslims and Sikhs, the Swadeshi movement, Stay Shodhak
Samaj movement, Sri Narayana Dharma Paripalana (S N D P.)
movement and tribal movements

Brahma Samaj

Mostly the principles of Brahma Samaj are negative The
movement was started against bad customs of Hindu religion and
society Therefore, it would be just to call it the protestant
movement of Hindu Religion But it does not mean that there is
an absence of spirituality in Brahma Samaj or there is no
spirituality and devotion in the society These aspects are found
in other Hindu movements also The characteristics of Brahma
Samaj which may be seen as distinct from other religious
movements is its protestant habit

(1) Brahma religion does not recognise the evidence of Shruti,
Smriti Shastra but admits the evidence of conscience only

(2) It deems the worship of gods and idol worship only.

(3) It does not believe on in carnation

(4) It does not recognise caste distinction

(5) It recognises rebirth

Brahma Samaj never remained as a public movement It was propagated among few intelligent and rich persons Today the followers of Brahma Samaj are very few in number Even it is counted as one of the big movements of India Now-a- days a progressive Hindu recognises all the thoughts of Brahma Samaj According to K.M. Panikar, Though Swami Dayanand Saraswati in his Satyartha Prakash follows the traditional method of claiming that he was revealing the true meaning of the vedas, there is no doubt that his teaching, which repudiated most of the Hindu social traditions, was even more revolutionary than the reasoned liberalism of Ram Mohan Roy and the Bengal Reformers '

Arya Samaj

In the middle of 19th century there was complete absence of grace and encouragement In these days there was no propaganda habit in Hindus Swami Dayanand Sarswati gave again self-reliance and Kshatriya grace to Hindus

After roaming for about 15 years here and there, Swami Dayanand got that Guru in Mathura whom he was searching The name of this Guru was Dandi Swami Virjanand He had inner knowledge and was a great scholar of Sanskrit grammar He had a great respect to books of ancient Rishis and a bitter hate for those Sanskrit books which were written later on He was a great opponent to idol worship and worship of many gods Swami DAyanand was much impressed with these thoughts He studied for two and a half years in the Ashram of Swami Virjanand In the end of study the Gurausked Swami Dayanand for his "Guru Dakshina" in this way "Make free true Shastras, remove the misconception of different faiths and religions and propagate Vedic religion "

After finishing his study Swami Dayanand came from Mathura to Agra From here he went to Gwalior, Jaipur, Pushkar, Ajmer cities etc In the beginning of journey he bore the trupund marks of ash on forehead and wore the garland of Rudraksh in his neck He came into contact with some missionaries and British officers in 1866 This year a radical change came into the mind of Swamiji He began to say Shiva is the husband of Parvati but it is the name of that God Almighty To take bath in Ganga and to go on pilgrimage is useless, Bhagawat Puran is not a human granth etc In these days he began to give lecture in public and do Shastrarth with Hindu Pandits and time to time distribute among public written pamphlets Everywhere he opposed Purans and told idol worship is against Vedas

Swami Dayanand was himself a pandit He learnt Vedas and Sanknt grammar His body, good health, fearless speech in Sanskrit attracted thousand of persons. This journey of Dayanand remembers Shanskar Digvijay of 9th century.

He reached Calcutta *enroute* Prayag, Mirzapur, Patna, Munger Bhagalpur etc. HEre few leaders of Brahma Samaj welcomed him Keshavachandra was prominent among them These persons were too much affected with Swami Dayanand because Swamiji was a great scholar of Sanskrit and had power to speak fluently He apposed to idol-worship and did not admit caste distinction by birth But both the scholars were not in agreement in the doubtless authority of Vedas and rebirth After returning from Calcutta Swami Dayanand roamed in many places in India and propagated his principles He published "Satyarth Prakash, from Prayag in 1874,

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The Ramakrishna Mission

The Ramakrishna Mission is an embodiment of the synthesis of ancient Indian and modern western cultures Ramakrishna Paramahansa (1836-86) was the founder of this socio-religious movement He was a poor priest in a temple at Dakshineshwar near Calcutta He had no formal education He had faith in all religions and performed religious exercises in accordance with Hinduism, Islam and Christianity All the different religious views are but different ways leading to the same goal was the message of Ramakrishna. He (God) is both one and many. He has form and is also without it This message is a great universal spirit as well as a constellation of symbols Thus, catholicity was the essence of the mission's founder He led a life of a secluded saint with broad catholicity, mysticism and spirituality.

Formally, the mission was founded in May 1897 by Pramahansa's disciple, Narendranath Dutta, who was later on known as Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902) Vivekananda was a graduate of Calcutta University. Two objectives of the mission are : (1) "to bring into existence a band of monks dedicated to a life of renunciation and practical spirituality, from among whom teachers and workers would be sent out to spread the universal message of Vedanta as illustrated in the life of Ramakrishna", and (2) "in conjunction with lay disciples, to carry on preaching, philanthropic and charitable works, looking upon all men, women and children, irrespective of caste, creed or colour, as veritable manifestations of the Divine"

Many beliefs and customs of Hindu religion appeared deplorable to Ram Mohan Roy and Swami Dayanand etc They told that these things were not in ancient time but entered afterwards They also made effort to prove these beliefs and customs are not according to Vedas and Shastras Thus these leaders laid whatever form of Hindu religion before the public was modified but besides this, it was also contradictory In this form many religious books were rejected and many exercises were told desertible

Paramhansa explained full Hindu religion, its all books all beliefs and customs It is immaterial that he preferred few beliefs and exercises which were more useful and dear to him but he never told that other exercises are desertible

Brahma Samaj, Arya Samaj and Christian Missionaries were criticising idol worship It was their allegations also that there is much obscenity and immorality in tantra and Shakti cult The learned Hindus also deemed these things below standard Ram Krishna propagated it from his own life and precepts that Shakti Puja and Tantra Sadhna are also respectful things like other exercises and parmartha may also be achieved through these ways

The supporters of customs got a good relief from the advocacy of Ram Krishna They thought that there is nothing to be afraid of or ashamed of the worship of naked Kali Even Paramhansa is also a worshipper of this naked idol Thus people began to search a spiritual and mystic meaning also in the aforesaid obscene exercises of Tantra Shri Ram Krishna Paramhansa is the first authoritative person of modern age who checked the exceeding effect of Christian missionaries We can tell him an obvious image of medieval Hindu religion of modern age

Thinking of Paramhansa—Ram Krishna wrote no book, delivered no speech and preached his precept through examples in his house-hold talks He does not establish the principle like a philosopher but preach spiritual and practicable matter like a saint he gives prominent place to the spiritual matter and second place to book learning

(1) **Experience of God**—According to Ram Krishna the mystery of religion and its essence is experience of God Where is the experience of God, all discussions of Shastras, Karma Kand and precepts are extinguished

(2) **Harmony of the religions**—This thought is prevailed in India since ancient time that all religions are true Paramhansa laid this principle forcibly before the public

(3) **God**—How God lives in all ? He lives as ladies of high families remain behind the curtain. They see all but no body can see them. Thus God is present in all but cannot be seen. Vice and virtue, religion and irreligion are the virtues of jeeva God is beyond these. One man reads Bhagwat in the light of lamp and other does fraudulent action What is the quality and defect of light in it ? Brahma and Shakti are different form only to say but they are indifferent truely. When Brahma lives without any action, then he is called Brahma or Shudra Brahma When he performs the action of creation, preservation and destruction then, he is called "Adya shakti "

(4) **Maya**—Shri Shankaracharya says God is maya uphit chaitanya (God is chaitanya alongwith maya) He is the creation of maya. But the thought of Paramhansa is different from Shankaracharya in this respect. He says maya affects only jeeva and not God

(5) **Nature and life**—Nature is subordinate to God absolutely. If God wishes, he can infringe the laws of nature

(6) **Social Service**—Social service has been preferred in the programme of Ram Krishna Mission. Many schools, colleges, hospitals and libraries are running under management of the mission The inclination towards action and service is the originality of Swami Vivekanand

(7) **Knowledge and devotion**—Parmhansa preferred devotion in comparison with knowledge.

Swami Vivekanand's Movement

Swami Vivekanand, the champion of Vedanta and river of Hindu orthodoxy, was a radical thinker He denounced many social institution and proclaimed that caste had nothing to do with Hinduism He propagated the qualities of Hindu religion in three continents

Swamji did not confine Vedant only to Sanyasis. He propagated in everywhere. He preferred Vedantic philosophy because this philosophy makes effort to understand (1) particular through universal, (2) its aim is unity and collaboration,(3) depends not only on men but on permanent principles Vedant is not a principle of only unity but it teaches indifferent (Abheda) in different (Bheda) Vedant tells that Satta is behind the forms may be seen in variety as only water is seen in the shape of ice, liquid and steam, like that we experience one Brahma as God, jeeva (creature)

It all is the form of Brahma, then why the world is called Maya ? Vivekanand answers it is not the meaning of Maya that the thing is not in the existence. The principle of Maya says that world is not and is World is not true because 'Trikalabadham Satyam' — that is, which is the same in three tenses that is truth and the world is always dynamic even then it is admitted that there is the purposive existence of the world Therefore, Maya is told childhood (conscious-unconscious), signified and undescrible

Vivekanand has given an honourable place to understanding In consideration of religion, he had not totally admitted the sayings of elders as a good proof He was not affected with the secret actions of yogis and mysticism of Theophists He admitted Jnanyoga as the best yoga and said that "If religion is not proved good upon the test of knowledge, it is not religion but mere a superstition " Like the other thinkers of 19th century Swami Vivekanand had a great respect for science Aeroplane and Atom Bomb were not invented as yet Therefore no destructive form of science was in sight hence it was natural for Swamiji to say that religion is science and science is religion

The main message of Swami Vivekanand was to be active Since centuries, Hindus were suffering from political slavery Therefore faithfulness, hopelessness and cowardliness were sufficient in them Swamiji challenged them and gave this message in the words of Upanishad i e Rise, awake and not stay until you achieve your aim We are giving a collection of his representative thoughts here

(1) Strength—Stand upon your legs and be a man First of all our young men should become strong Religion will come afterwards You will reach nearer to heaven through football in comparison with Gita When you will stand upon your legs firmly you will feel yourself as a man, then you will better understand the importance of Upanishad and soul Yoga, yajana, good morning or Dandwat Pranam and jup is not religion They are good up to the extent where they abet to do good and courageous work

(2) Sin—Vedant did not admit the talk of sin It accepts the mistake only and according to its theory, you are committing a great mistake when you say, "I am weak, I am sinner" Who understands himself day and night as poor, humble and nothing, he becomes nothing at all

(3) Service—Where you will go in search of God Are these poor, agrieved and weak not God ? Why do you not worship these

It is impossible to search truth without non-violence Truth and non violence are like the two sides of a coin. We cannot tell that this side is right and this side is reverse. Even then non-violence is the means and truth is the aim.

Recognition of the equality of all Religious—Religion is absolute in its independence but as we have not seen God, like that we have not seen the absolute religion. We are incomplete. Therefore the religion imagined by me is incomplete. When we admit that all religions are man-imagined, we admit its incompleteness also

Such a man cannot pride thus than his religion is best and all humanity must accept it for emancipation He will neither forsake his religion nor he shall shut his eyes from the defects of it What kind of respect he will have towards his religion, he will have the same respect to other religions and its followers

The Abolition of Untouchability—The abolition of untouchability was a plank in Mahatma Gandhi's programme from 1919 He regarded untouchability as the greatest blot of Hinduism. According to Gandhiji, untouchability has nothing to do with caste or varna system It is an artificial distinction of high and low that has crept into Hinduism

Shri Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan

In this modern age Swami Dayanand, Poet Ravindranath and karmayogi Mahatma Gandhi became the famous reformers of Hindu religion Shri Sarvapalli Radha Krishnan became the famous philosopher of Hindu religion

Few Indian and Western philosophers have a faith that Hindu religion is the religion of non-attachment This religion preaches that the world is in the form of sorrow. It is destructive Therefore having detachment from it and keeping the idea of desertion we can achieve emancipation. World renowned philosophers Waitzer has supported this belief in his book "Indian Thought and its Development". Besides this, he told that quite contrary to this belief of detachment European Philosophy and Christian religion preaches us that heavenly kingdom well be *established in this world Here in this life we have to achieve* emancipation by justice, religion and good conduct.

Radha Krishnan did not fell good about this criticism He contradicted it by many philosophical reasons He says that in Hindu religion attachment and detachment both are found

Dr Radhaknshnan attracted the attention on the *characteristics of Hindu religion which stresses on the reform of* Hindu religion Varna, Dharma and Ashrama Dharma is related to this life Thus the theory of rebirth encourages morality because a man enjoys good or bad results of his actions The religious books of Hindu-Ramayana and Mahabharat explain the universal religion They preach to act like Ram etc and not to act like Ravan etc Arjun wanted to become a *vairagi* but in Bhagwatgita Shri Krishna preached him *to do the needful* At last Radhaknshnan aimed that philosophy is closely related to public life Our philosophy is not merely a intellectual exercise, it tries to solve *the problems of life Therefore this criticism of Swaitzer is baseless* Dr. Radhaknshnan admitted that essential element of creation is not nature but conscious soul

The Theosophical Society

The Theosophical Society was founded in 1886 by Madam H P Blavatsky and Colonel H S Olcott Later on, Mrs Annie Besant took up the leadership of this organisation to revive and strengthen Hinduism, Zorastrianism and Budhism Bipin Chandra Pal, Aurobindo Ghose, Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Mahatma Gandhi also made use of the Upanishads and the epics for making India a secular state, and for effecting social reforms Gandhi did tremendous work for the removal of untouchability

Reform Movements among Muslims, Sikhs and Parsis

The Muslims had four revivalistic movements (1) the Ahmedia movement, (2) the Aligarh movement, (3) Sir Mahmud Iqbal's movement, and (4) Shaikh Abdul Halil Sharar's movement The Muslims of India did not come forward to the extent that the Hindus did during the British period These movements stressed upon universal brotherhood, liberal education on and liberal interpretation of the Quran The Aligarh Muslim University came into being in 1890 An All-India Muslim Educational Conference was also organised Sayyid Ahmad Khan was the leader of the Aligarh based movement

Parsis and Sikhs also launched several socio religious reforms in their respective communities Parsis vowed to discard orthodoxy, particularly in regard to education of women, marriage and the social position of women The Sikhs did a lot of work to reform the management of the Gurudwaras There was practically

a revolt against the Mahants of these shrines The Khalsa College
at Amritsar was established by the end of the nineteenth century.

The Swadeshi Movement

"Lokahitawadi", a reformer in Maharashtra, an ardent
advocate of the Swadeshi Movement, listed the following points for
reforming society.

(1) all should devoutly worship God,
(2) all ceremonies, except those connected with initiation,
marriage and death, should be abolished Ceremonials and
prayers should be performed in one's own language;
(3) every person should have liberty to act, speak and write
according to what he thinks,
(4) men and women should have equal rights in social and
religious functions,
(5) morality is higher than performance of ritual,
(6) no person is to be treated with contempt. Pride of caste is
unbecoming All men are to be treated with charity. Do good
to all,
(7) love of the motherland and good of the country should always
be borne in mind,
(8) the rights of the people are higher than those of the
Government,
(9) the rules laid down by the Government and rules suggested
by reason should be observed,
(10) everybody should strive for the growth of learning, and
(11) truth should be the abiding principle of conduct

These canons of conduct show that India was trying to
rejuvenate its socio-cultural fabric and make a dignified place for
itself in the changed circumstances It had become necessary to
change, to discard and to adopt some elements simultaneously
Striving for synthesis had become a necessity Condemnation of
ritual paraphernalia, caste system, rules of marriage, and of
differences between the sexes had become absolutely necessary.

The Satyashodhak
Samaj Movement

Jotiba Phule organised a powerful movement against the
Brahmanas in Maharashtra. He started a school for girls; one for
the "untouchables" and a home for widows He challenged the
supremacy of the Brahmanas His two writings—*Sarvajanik*

Satyadharma Pustak and *Gulamgiri* became sources of inspiration for the common masses He founded the *Satyashodhak Samaj* to carry out his crusade against the Brahmana hegemony The Satyashodhak Samaj (Truth Seekers Society), besides being anti-Brahmanic, had a programme of positive action for women's liberation, propagating education, and for economic betterment Mahatma Phule used the symbol of Rajah Bali as opposed to the Brahmin's symbol of Rama The middle castes the Kunbis Malis and Dhangars developed a sense of identity as a class against Brahmins who were thought of as exploiters In the 1900s the Maharaja of Kolhapur encouraged the non-Brahmin movement The movement spread to the southern states in the first decade of twentieth century Kammas, Reddis and Vellalas, the powerful intermediate castes, joined hands against the Brahmins The Muslims also joined them

The S.N.D.P. Movement

A number of backward class movements were launched in the pre independence period These were similar to Mahatma Phule's Satyashodhak Samaj Movement, with the similar aim of *ending oppression by the Brahmins* The Brahmins were the first to exploit modern educational and employment opportunities The upper non-Brahmin castes failed to get access for these opportunities The Sri Narayana Dharma Paripalana (S N D P 0 move ment, among the Izhavas of Kerala, is an example of conflict between the depressed classes and the upper non-Brahmin castes The Izhavas were a caste of toddy-tapperes in Kerala They were like the Nadars of Tamil Nadu and the Idigas of Karnataka The Izhavas were the largest single caste group constituting 26 per cent of the total population of Kerala In a developing country like India, movements led by the backward classes speak of their low status, disadvantages, discriminations and deprivations which they suffered for along time at the hands of the ruling classes and *communities*

The S N D P movement is an example of a "regional" movement The S N D P movement pertains to the Izhavas of Kerala who were untouchables The ideology of the movement was formulated by Sri Narayana Guru Swamy He formed a programme *of action known as the S N D.P Yogam The Yogam took up* several issues, including the right of admission to public schools, recruit ment to government employment, entry into temples, on roads and political representation Most of these objectives were realised The

movement as a whole brought about transformative structural changes which included upward social mobility, a shift in the traditional distribution of power, and a federation of "backward castes" into a large conglomeration.

New Trends and Problems

In India also there have been many changes in the field of religion Religious fanaticism and superstitions have decreased as a result of the medieval and modern reform movements If we examine the religious social structure of India we would find that it has 85 per cent Hindus, 10 per cent Muslims and 5per cent Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and the followers of tribal religions Hinduism does not have organised institutional structure in the sense in which Christianity and Islam have. In the nineteenth century various sects came into existence which provided institutional base to Hinduism Arya Samaj has its own national, regional and local committees Ramakrishna Mission also has its centres and places of worship throughout the world It also has a group of dedicated youths like that of the Christian missionaries The followers of Maharishi Aurobindo, Maharishi Raman, and Sai Baba also have their organisations and centres It must be noticed here that all these sects have influenced the educated urban middle class Their centres also exist in cities These centres are also involved in social welfare and other activities In the same manner the followers of Christianity, Islam, Sikhism and the Parsi religion have also done commendable work in the field of education, health and social welfare under the influence of modernisation

On the one hand new ideologies and scientific temperament have restricted the influence of religion. On the other hand scientific discoveries have created situations for destruction of humanity As a result of which people are returning to religion to attain spiritual peace and human dignity These mutually contradictory processes provide a useful opportunity for studying religion, to the student of sociology Religious sentiment also has a negative aspect. India is experiencing religious fanaticism that is visible in other parts of the world Religious fanaticism has generated hatred, intolerance r l violence There is a need to analyse negative role of religion fro 1 sociological viewpoint.

7

STATUS OF WOMEN
IN INDIA

CHANGES IN VARIOUS PERIODS, PRESENT PROBLEMS OF INDIAN WOMEN

Women have been treated as "objects" by the male-dominated society in India and elsewhere However, there is no uniform pattern of social cultural and economic destination between men and women In India gender based consciousness has its origin in the emergence of the middle classes and their problems Patriarchy is very strong in India even after forty years of independence and despite several movements for the upliftment of women launched by several women's organisations sex morals have a direct bearing on caste and class groups

Four aspects have been studied in detail in the context of feministic problems (1) Production (2) reproduction, (3) sexuality, and (4) socialisation of children However, the Marxists and the socialist have over emphasised the first aspect, In India's context male are seen to dominate all the four aspects, though women carry major responsibilities in these spheres Male supremacy emanates from caste class, patriarchy and sexuality of the male

Women are treated as *dalits* in their own families by parents in law and even by their husbands They are stationed at the receiving end This is generally true of families belonging to all castes and classes but it is more often found among those groups *who are still under the influence of feudalism or have feudalistic life styles and values* Even the neo-rich in the countryside have put restrictions on women getting higher education migrating and taking up jobs The fact of the matter is that women have been made parasitic by men and by the social milieu they have created for them This chapter discusses the status of women in ancient medieval, British and post-Independence India the role of women's organisations, legislations social movement and man-women relations These have been discussed with a view to understand women's quest for equality with men

Women in History

The position of women in the Indian society has been a very complicated one In fact, it would not be an exaggeration-to say that the recent changes in the status of women in India is not a sign of progress but is really a recapturing of the position that they held in the early Vedic period

Literary and historical researches have now established beyond doubt that the women held a position of equality with men during the Vedic period The girls as wells as the boys were required to undergo *Upanyanam* ceremonies in order to be initiated to the

Vedic studies In fact, the education of women was looked upon as *so important that the Atharva Veda* asserted that "the success of women in her married life depends upon her proper training during the Brahmacharya " According to *Sarvanukramanika*, there are as many as twenty women who composed the hymns of the Rig Veda Some of the renowned Vedic women are Lopamudra, Viswavara, Sikata, Nivavari, and Ghosha *Aswalayana Gruhyaustra* required posterity to read every day the names of great women like Sulabha, Maitreye, Gargyachaknave. Unfortunately, there is no record of their work

It is well known that in the Upanishadic period there were great Brahamavadinis, who were life-long students of philosophy. In the *Bhrihadaranyakopanishad* one of the great challengers of the eminent sage Yagnavalkya is Gargi, who asked many subtle *and intricate questions. One of the most celebrated Upanishadic* passages is the conversation between maitreye and her husband Yagnavalkya Yagnavalkya decided to divide his property between his two wives and renounce the world Maitreye preferred to get initiation to the knowledge of Brahmavidya rather than choose to inherit her husband's property Even in the Buddhist time there were great women scholars. Some of them like sanghamitra, the sister of the great emperor went to ceylon to spread Buddhism. Among the authors of Theragatha are 42 women, 32 of women *were unmarried. According to the jaina tradition, Yayant, a* princess, remained unmarried and received ordination from Mahavira himself. On the basis of these facts from literature Altekar writes, "We may there fore conclude that many girls in well to do families used to be given a fair amount of education down to about 300 B C "

While marriage was looked upon as a religious and social duty, and while it was held that as unmarried person was not eligible to participate in vedic sacrifices, it was not looked upon as compulsory for every girl The women who remained unmarried and grew old in the house of her parents were called "Amajur" As shakuntala Rao Sastri writes, "The extent of the word "Amajur", which means a girl who gre v old at her father's house, and the *reference to the attendance of maidens, young women at the* "Sumana" festival as well as the unmarried female rishis as Apala-Atreya, suggests that matrimony was not compulsory for a women and that no limitation had been placed on the age of marriage."

The Vedic women being grown up and educated had a voice in the selection of their husband. Often there were also love marriage-*Gandharva Vivaha*

The reference in the *Rig Veda* to the life of a widow are very few but it was not characterized by restrictions and austerities as in the post Vedic days Re-marriage of widows was allowed There are a number of references to the custom of Niyoga where a brother of the deceased husband could marry the widow with the permission of the elders Other versions show that she could marry any person, not necessarily the brother of the deceased husband The earlier Dharmasastra writers allowed divorce In fact, Kautilya gives detailed rules of divorce As regards *sati*, burning of the widow, Shakuntala Rao sastri writes, "The *Rig Veda* does not mention anywhere the practice of the burning or burial of widows with their dead husbands"

As regards property rights, according to the Vedic hymns, both husband and wife were joint owners of the property As noted earlier, the *Brihadaranyaka Upnishad* refers to the division of Yagnavalkya's property between his two wives As Romeshchandra Dutt (1848-1909) wrote "Hindu women held an honoured place They inherited and possessed property, they took share in sacrifices and religious duties, they attended great assemblies and state occasions, they also distinguished themselves in science and learning at their times Considered as intellectual companions of their husbands, as the friends and loving helpers in the journey of life of their partners, in their religious duties, and the centre of their domestic bliss, Hindu wives were honoured and respected in ancient times "

Thus, the position of the Hindu women in the early Vedic time was very different from the lower status to which they were degraded after about 300 B C As Altekar writes, "The reasons why daughters were not unpopular in ancient India during the early centuries are not difficult to understand They could be initiated in Vedic studies and were entitled to offer sacrifice to God The son was not absolutely necessary for this purpose Further, the marriage of the daughter was not a difficult problem, it was often solved by the daughter herself Further, there was no dread of widowhood, because levirate and remarriage were allowed by society and even fairly common " The description of the position of women before 300 B C shows that she enjoyed a high status It appears as if several drastic social change took place in the Indian society from about 300 B C to the beginning of the Christian era

which led to the curtailment of the freedom of women. Students of Indian social history have tried to find the reasons for the changes which took place in the status of women after 300 B C One of the reasons advance is that the sons were valued more than daughters because the Aryans encountered various tribal people who inhabited the Gangetic plains when they moved East from the Punjab This movement led *to a desire for sons who would* participate in the wars against the people of the area. Another hypothesis is that greater importance was placed on ancestral worship than in the Rig vedic days Consequently, sons were more valued than the daughter Yet another reason advanced by scholars is the reaction to the Upanishadic, Buddhistic and Jaina influence of asceticism As the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* stated, "Seeking the Self alone monks relinquish all rites and renounce their homes Ancient knowers of the self did not desire progeny as also rites and meditation of conditioned brahmin the three means respectively to the three external worlds. They renounce their desire for sons, for wealth and for the worlds and wandered about as mendicants "

Many young women renounced their homes and joined the Buddhistic and the Jaina monasteries The life which some of these monks and nuns led gave rise to a revulsion to the ascetic way of life and the monasteries. It is also presumed that one of the reasons for practice of early marriage of girls is to prevent them from entering monastic life Whatever the reasons, there is no doubt that the *great social changes which took place after 300 B C*, led to a degradation in the status of women

With the consolidation of the Aryan power a vast majority of the subjects were non-Aryan people The Aryans married the non-Aryan women Vishnu and other early *Dharmasastra* writers *did not object* to these marriages but prohibited the non-Aryan woman from participating in the religious rituals The non-Aryan wife could not participate in the religious sacrifice as she did not know sanskrit and as she had no education, Gradually, all women, Aryan as well as non-Aryan, became ineligible for Vedic studies and religious duties There is also the *problem of increased* complexity of the Vedic sacrifices which rendered the wife's *association a more formal affair The complex rituals needed a long* training of over ten to twelve years which even the Aryan wife could not obtain Gradually, Upanyanam for girls be came a mere formality Since girls were not educated early marriages became common, girls were married soon after puberty Buy about A D 205

some of the *Dharmasastras* declared that marriage was a substitute for Upanyanam for girls Since Upanyanam was performed at about the age of eight or nine, marriage came to be performed at an early age As Altekar writes, "The discontinuance of Upanayanam, the neglect of education and the lowering of the marriage age produced disastrous consequences upon the position and status of women" Gradually, Niyoga and widow remarriage were prohibited Marriage became an irrevocable union as far as the wife was concerned The *Smriti* writers preched that the wife should look upon her husband as a God Some of them went to the extent of asserting that she should worship him even if he was a rake

When the kingdoms became large, the kings maintained large harems This inevitably lead to the seculsion of women among the kings, and among the nobles who imitated them The purdah system also came into the royal families

• The political conditions also appear to have had their impact on the status of women The period between 300 B C and A D 300 saw the invasion of the Greeks, the Scythians and the Parthians, then the Kushans The political reverses, the atrocities due to the war and the decline of prosperity produced a wave of despondency in society once again The ideals of renouncement and Sannyasa preached earlier by the Upanishads, Buddhism and Jainism began to spread Theses new developments effected the status of the widow Those who opposed the Niyoga and remarriage of widows were strengthened in their position The widow was asked to devote himself to an ascetic life at home All this led to the increase of the childless widows The tonsure of the widow also came into vogue by about the eighth century A D The purdah custom was *practised more widely among the middle classes To Quote Altekar,* "Thus for nearly 2,000 years from 20 B C to A D 1800 the position of woman steadily deteriorated though she was fondled by the parents, loved by the husband, and revered by her children The revival of sati, the prohibition of remarriage, the spread of purdah and the greater prevalence of polygamy made her position very bad " Thus, there was a vast gulf between the status of the woman in the early Vedic period and that in the nineteenth century The dual standards of morality set up by Manu prevailed right up to 1950

As Neera Desai puts it, "Ideologically woman was considered a *completely inferior species, inferior to the male, having no* significance, no personality, socially, she was kept in a state of utter subjection, denied any right, suppressed and oppressed, she

was further branded as basically lacking the ethical fibre. The parriarchal joint family, the customs of polygamy, the purdah, the property structure, early marriage, *sati* (self immolation of the widows) or a state of permanent widowhood, all these contributed to the smothering of the free development of women."

Thus, it appears as if the neglect of the education of women, which was couple with child marriage on the one hand, and the customs of polygamy, seclusion, and purdah on the other, brought about a tremendous degradation in the status of the women.

The wave of reformist though in the nineteenth century initiated by Rammohan Rai (1774-1833), and followed by up Iswarchandra Vidyasagar (1820-1871), Dayananda Saraswati (1827-1883), Keshab Chandra Sen (1838-1884), and others, led to very significant legislative, social and educational changes Finally, Mahatma Gandhi and the Indian National Movement led to the great emancipation of the Indian women in the twentieth century.

Before proceeding to describe the efforts of the enlightened men and women in the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, it must be emphasized that most of the disabilities regarding purdha, seclusion, lack of divorce and remarriage of the widows were confined to the upper castes and to those living in the urban areas It must be remembered that upper caste people and the urban people hardly constituted ten per cent of the population. Rural women, though uneducated, had the freedom to divorce the husband and remarry The widow could remarry, though even in the rural areas, the divorce and the remarried women were looked upon as inauspicious (The *Sudhrakamalaakara* written in the 17th century expressly permits divorce to the Sudras and other lower castes) Further, the rural women took full part in agriculture and the craft work of the husband they also had the freedom to sell milk, vegetables and other produce in the neighbouring towns. In fact,early in the morning even now one can see hundreds of women coming from their villages with head loads of all kinds of merchandise to sell in the towns Women could move about freely and could participate in the religious festivals, etc Thus more than 90 per cent of women had considerable freedom in society and a large share of equality with men though child marriage and polygame existed in the villages and thus curtailed their freedom.

We may now briefly enquire into the changes in the outlook regarding the status of women among the enlightened Indians of the nineteenth century One of the important reasons for this change in out look is the acceptance of the tenets of liberal philosophy from the west which emphasized the principle of contract rather than status, a rational outlook of life and its problems, freedom of speech, criticism of authority, questioning of accepted dogmas, and, finally, the recognition of the value of the individual and insistence of the *rights* of man as opposed to his *duties* The other great impetus to the changed outlook is the study of the *Upanishads* by the reformers like Ram mohan Rai and the Brahmos on the one hand, and study of the ancient Vedic society by the revivalists like Dayananda Saraswati and the Aryasamajists on the other Next there was the realization among the Indian liberals like Dadabhai Naoroji, Gopalkrishna Gokhale, Badruddeen Tayabjee, and others who were convinced that national uplift and national progress was impossible without the education of women and their emancipation Finally, there was the firm faith in Mahatma Gandhi and the leaders of the national movement that the liberation of the country from the bondage of imperialism was impossible without the active participation of women who constituted half the population of the country

The nineteenth century saw for the first time in India, social legislation enacted by the Government It was Rammohan Rai who showed for the first time that the ancient Hindu scriptures did not prescribe *sati* This strengthened the hands of Lord William Bentinck, the Governor-General of India at that time, and in 1829 he abolished *sati* and made it a crime

The Bramosamaj established by Rammohan Rai stood for the principle of freedom of women and equality of sexes So it campaigned widow remarriage It was the untiring efforts of Iswarchandra Vidyasagar that lead to the promulgation of the Widow Remarriage Act of 1856, which made widow remarriage legal Thus between them, these great Indian leaders of the nineteenth century enabled the Hindu widow to attain a status in society by removing the legal obstacles in her way But it took another century before there was a real social change in India, change in the outlook of the people, particularly in the higher castes, towards the widows The great leaders of the nineteenth century were shocked that so many thousands were child widows because of the practice of child marriage that was prevalent throughout the society Another great landmark of the nineteenth

century was the Civil Marriage Act of 1872, which was passed on
account of the courage and perseverance of Keshab Chandra
Sen This Act made marriage a secular ceremony. It provided for
the registration of the marriage It raised the age of marriage of
girls to 14 years and permitted widow remarriage and inter-caste
marriage which were illegal up to that time. But the most
significant feature of the Act was the enforcement of monogamy.
Here again it took another three-quarters of a century before the
Hindu society accepted these great social changes of inter caste
marriage and monogamy in 1956

The basic aim of the ancient Hindu law-givers was to
preserve the property of the joint family So a woman could not
inherit the property because she would take the property out of
the family to her husband's family. The only redeeming feature
was the recognition of *streedhana*—movable property which was
given to the women by her parents or her husband So a
revolutionary change was implied in the Married Women's Property
Act of 1874 which widened the scope of *streedhana* to include
earnings by a woman and the money she acquired through her
artistic and literary skills This legislation provided the incentive
to the women to engage herself in remunerative work and acquire
property on the basis of her own earnings

As noted above, for more than 2,000 years, girls below eight
were given in marriage This led to the horror of "child widow".
Children of six to eight years were looked upon as "widows" when
their "husbands" passed away It must be remembered that even
in 1930, the longevity of an Indian was only 25 years It was the
efforts of another great social leader, Behramji Malabari which
lead to the Age of Consent Act of 1881, which raised the age of
consent to 12 years This abolished at least by law, though not in
practice, marriage of girls below 12 years

Thus through their efforts, the great social leaders of India
of the nineteenth century were able to get many legislations passed
which removed the obstacles in the way of the progress of women
It must be realized that there were no elected legislatures at this
time The Government, due to the Indian war of Independence of
1857, were reluctant to with social matters

Another significant feature of the nineteenth century India
is the attempt made by these social leaders to educate Indian girls
For more than 2,000 years, from about 300 BC, there was
practically no education for women Only a few women of the upper
castes and upper classes were given some education at home But

even here there was tremendous social resistance because at that time only dancing girls could read and write and so literacy of woman was looked upon as a disgrace Of course, it must be realized that hardly five per cent of Indians as a whole were literate in the country throughout the history So it is inevitable that women should be illiterate but the important change that we have to bear in mind is the view of the later Dharamasastra writers, who asserted that women, like the sudras, were ineligible for Vedic studies Thus, *according to them only a "handful" of men in the country were eligible for education*

It was the American mission which first started a school for girls in Bombay in 1824 According to the figures available, by 1829, with in five years, as many as 400 girls were enrolled in this school It was only in 1851 that an Indian society was formed to start girls' school In Madras, Munroe reported in 1822 that more than 5,000 girls attended the indigenous primary schools as against nearly 200,000 boys On the other hand, in Bengal, Adam wrote, "The notion of providing the means of instruction for female children never enters into the minds of parents A superstitious feeling is alleged to exist in the majority of the Hindu families, principally cherished by the women and not discouraged by men, that a girl taught to write and read will soon, after marriage, become a widow " According to the report of the National Committee on Women's Education of 1959, "It cannot be denied that the general picture of the education of women was the most unsatisfactory and *women received practically no formal instruction whatever, except for the little domestic instruction that was available to the daughters of the upper class families "*

According to the Charter Act of 1813, the East India Company was entrusted with the responsibility *for the education of the Indian people* But its efforts were restricted to the education of boys since the policy of the Company was one of strict social and religious neutrality, they were afraid of promoting education of girls since it was believed that the Hindu religion at that time prohibited it The famous woods Dispatch of 1854 reported that there were 65 girls' schools in Bombay presidency with 3,500 pupils, 256 girls' schools in Madras presidency, attended by over 8,000 girls, and 288 girls' school in Bengal Presidency attended by over 7,000 pupils But in the rest of the country there were very few schools Thus, due to the efforts of the Christian missions and the voluntary Indian bodies significant progress had been made in the enrollment of girls in primary schools by the middle of the nineteenth century in comparison with hardly any education at the beginning of that century, except in some parts of the South

While in the first half of the nineteenth century, the missionary efforts as well as the efforts of the Indian voluntary organizations led to the starting of girls' primary schools, particularly in Bombay, Bengal and Madras States, four events in the second half of that century led to the great increase of girls' schools and enrollment of girls The Woods Despatch of 1854 on education is one of the most significant features in the history of Indian education, since it accepted the responsibility of the Government to promote primary education in general and that of the girls in particular However, Government efforts could not go a long way due to the upheavals that took place in 1857 as a result of the Indian War of Independence The Government became very hesitant after this and pursued not only the path of religious neutrality but also that of social neutrality For example, the 1859 Despatch on education was very cautious and referred to "both the difficulties and the importance of female education" and looked for "safe and proper methods" to permit extension of schools for females But soon there was a change in the outlook of the Government which led to the establishment of the municipalities and Local Fund Committees in 1870 The local governments were enabled to help in the development of primary education in India As a result of this, facilities were provided for the starting of special schools for the girls Further, in the same year 1870, training colleges for women were established for the first time and women were trained to become teachers in the girls' schools. Finally, the Education Commission in 1882 discussed the problems of women's education with great insight, it made several recommendations not only to open more schools for girls but also to attract girls above twelve to the schools It also recommended the employment of women teachers in the schools and the appointment of women as inspectors of the girls' school so that the teachers as well as pupils could be comfortable Another important recommendation that it made was that special stipends should be given to widows who came for teacher training

As a result of all these efforts, great progress was made in girls' education in the last quarter of the 19th century. The census report of 1951 gave 'addies not only regarding the position of girls' ucation but also regarding literacy among the women. The report the National Committee on Women education 1959 observes, "If iese statistics are compared with those of 1854 given earlier, it will be readily seen that the number of girls under instruction had considerably increased In spite of these advance, however, this

table will show, that *for every 1,000 boys at schools, the number of girls under instruction was only 46* " While in 1854, only about 25,000 girls had been enrolled in schools, the enrollment went beyond 117,000 in 1881 and increased to 127,000 in 1892 For the first time two women from Bethune School graduated from the Calcutta University in 1883 By 1902 there were over 256,000 girls in various institutions and as many as 169 in the liberal arts colleges, and 87 in the professional college

Another significant feature of the last decades of the nineteenth century is the entry of women into the professions As noted above, due to the opening of the women training colleges and the special facilities recommended by the Education Commission of 1882, a large number of women became teachers Secondly, many women entered the newly opened schools and colleges to qualify themselves as nurses and doctors Thus women were attracted to the two professions of teaching and medicine by the end of 19th century

An increase in enrollment of girls on the one hand and entry of women into the professions on the other indicate the marked change that took place in the outlook of men and women in the latter part of the nineteenth century When one realizes that at the beginning of that century there was hardly any literate woman in the country excepting a few in the aristocratic houses, it is astonishing that by the end of the century hundreds of thousands of girls were enrolled in the newly opened institutions all over the country and the that they were eager to graduate from the universities that were established in the middle of the century There is no doubt that the changed outlook towards women advocated by Rammohan Rai at the beginning of the nineteenth century had tremendous impact not only with respect to social legislation, which removed some of the disabilities suffered by Indian women for more than 2,000 years and helped in raising the age of marriage, but also led to the establishment of several thousand institutions for the education of girls When one considers that at the beginning of that century *sati* was prevalent and thousands of women were burnt at the funeral pyres of their husbands and that hundreds of thousands of girls were killed as soon as they were born, it is astonishing that the Indian society could change so drastically that by the end of the century girls *were not only sent by the parents to attend schools and colleges* but also to go and work as teachers, doctors and nurses

Probably, Rani Laxmi Bai of Jhansi (1835-1858) inspired women as well as men of India regarding the potentialities of women by the way in which she participated in 1857 war of Indian Independence and died fighting valiantly on the battlefield. She has became a legendary figure since then.

There were also several Indian women leaders who worked for the emancipation of women in the nineteenth century Among them the work of some women may be briefly recounted here.

The foremost among them was Pandita Rama Bai (1858-1922) She came from a learned Brahmin family in Karnataka She was a great scholar of Sanskrit and addressed many learned groups in different parts of the country and was given the title of "Pandita" and "Sarasvathi" for her deep knowledge of Sanskrit. After the death of her parents, she and her brother travelled in different parts of the country She spoke about social injustice done to women in the society. They went to Calcutta in 1878 Two years later her brother also died A Little later in 1880 she married a Bengali pleader of a lower caste Thus, even at that time she was bold enough to marry a man of different caste Thus, even at that time she was bold enough to marry a man of different caste and different language After the death of her husband two years later she returned to Poona and started the Arya Mahila Samaj with the help of leaders like Ranade and Bhandarkar In 1882, she gave evidence before the Hunter Commission who were very happy to see 300 women being educated in the samaj She pleaded for facilities for women to quality themselves in medicine. In 1883, she went to England and was baptised as a Christian She went to America in 1886 On her return to Bombay in 1889, she started the Sharada Sadan to provide a home for the destitute high caste widows, again with the help of Ranade, Bhandarkar and others However, because the Hindu widows were converted to Christianity there was a strong protest against the institution by Tilak and other Hindu leaders, as a result of which even liberal leaders like Ranade and Bhandarkar had to give up their connection with the Sadan After this, she shifted to Khedgoan near Poona and established the Mukti Sadan The institute soon prospered and had on its rolls nearly 2,000 children and women training sections from the kindergarten to the teacher and the industrial section In spite of the criticism against her, she was able to give general education and vocational training to several thousand women who were able to become self-dependent.

Another outstanding women who contributed to the emancipation of women in the nineteenth century was Rama Bai Ranade (1862-1922) She married the great economist and social reformer Justice Mahadev Govind Ranade when she was just eleven Ranade educated her and helped her in her various activities She started the Hindu Ladies Club in her house in 1884 and later opened classes for illiterate women and widows She also started the Poona Seva Sadan with branches in different parts of Maharashtra Finally, she started a Nursing Medical Association and trained nurses

Another woman of outstanding merit was the great revolutionary Madam Cama (1861 1936) She was a pioneer in the struggle for freedom. She left India in 1902 and settled down in England and joined the Indian revolutionary movement there

Toru Dutt (1856-1877) of Bengal was a great literary celebrity of the nineteenth century Another great writer was Svarnakumari Devi (1855-1932) of the famous Tagore family She wrote historical and social novels in Bengali Para, a talented painter of the Kangra school of Rajput painting, was a woman artist of great repute

In the last decade of the century, Swami Vicekananda (1863-1902) gave a tremendous impetus to the emancipation of women from selusion and bondage He said, "That country and that nation which did not respect women have never become great nor will ever be in the future" He took a stand for the liberation of women and equality of treatment on the basis of the Vedantic ideals that "one and the same treatment on the basis of the Vedantic ideals that " one and the same self is present in all beings' He attributed the helplessness and dependence of woman on man to the training given to her and asserted "however, when she is no longer oppressed she will become a lion " He emphasized the ideal that through education, women should be enabled to solve their own problems by thinking independently

Another great Indian figure who lived to be a centenarian was Karve who started the Hingne women's Education Institution in Poona in 1896 in which he imparted training not only in academic subjects but also in domestic economy, to unmarried, married, widowed and deserted women with branches in other parts of the Maharashtra Ultimately, he was responsible for starting the S N D T Women's University in 1916, adopting the mother tongue as the medium of instruction It was recognized as a university in 1938 It has a number of high schools and colleges affiliated to it thus, it was a great step in the advance of women's education, particularly in Maharashtra

The year 1917 is of great significance in the history of the progress of Indian women. It was in 1917 that Annie Besant (1847-1933), an enlightened British woman who settled down in India since 1893, launched the Home Rule agitation. When she was interned by the British, the Indian women led processions to temples to offer their prayers for her release. In the same year she was elected the President of the Calcutta Session of the Indian National Congress. In her presidential address she said, "The strength of Home Rule Movement was rendered tenfold greater by the adhesior to it of a large number of women who brought to its helping the uncalculating heroism, the endurance, the self sacrifice of the feminine nature. our league's best recruits and recruiters are amongst the women of India."

The Calcutta Session also expressed the opinion that "the same tests be applied to women as to men in regard to franched and the eligibility to all elective bodies concerned with the local Government and Education."

Thus, the Congress recognized officially the equality of the sexes by inviting a woman to be the president and by expressing that the same tests should be applied to men and woman regarding franchise and election as early as 1917. It was in the end of that year that a deputation of Indian women represented to the British parliament and demanded the enfranchisement of women on a basis of equality with men.

After the Jallianwalabagh massacre in 1919, when hundreds of men women and children were killed, a large contingent of women delegates, nearly 200, attended the Congress Session at Nagpur. This was a striking evidence of the political awakening of the Indian women

Mahatma Gandhi rendered signal-service to the advancement of the women's movement by making thousands of them, of all classes, to come out of their homes and participate in the political movement. As Amrit Kaur wrote, "A Passionate Lover of humanity, an implacable foe of injustice in Whatever form or sphere, it is small wonder that Gandhiji early espoused the women's cause. Gandhi's fundamental faith in the equality of women was based on the doctrine of nonviolence He wrote, "In a plan of life based on non-violence, woman has as much right to establish her own destiny as man has to establish his."

From the very beginning Gandhi preached against wrongs done to women in the nave of *Dharmasastras*, law and tradition He wrote, "It is sad to think that the Smritis contain texts which could command no respect from men who cherish the liberty of women as their own and who regard her as the mother of the race Of course, there are the *Smriti* texts, which gave gave women her due place and regard her with deep veneration The question arises as to what to do with the *Smritis* that contain texts that are repugnant to the moral sense. all that is printed in the name of scriptures need not be taken as the world of God or the inspired word"

On another occasion he was even stronger in expression, "I have defended *varanshrama dharma* But Brahminism that could tolerate untouchability, virgin widowhoold and spoliation of virgins, stinks in my nostrils There is no knowledge of Brahman therein There is no true interpretation of scriptures. It is undiluted animalism"

Thus, Gandhi was very clear in his mind that ancient Indian scriptures do not advocate social inequality and social injustice As seen above, he is wholly correct in his standpoint as far as the most ancient texts are concerned, but later texts, particularly those written after 300 B C. have directly advocated social inequality, not only regarding the education of women but also by promoting child marriage and widowhood till death With respect to those passages he declared that they should not be followed In other words, according to Gandhi, the important criterion to judge the *Dharamasastras* is whether they advocate social equality and social justice, between man and man and between man and woman

This is why he was always a fighter for the equality of human beings and freedom for individuals consequently, he unequivocally stood for the *emancipation of women* as he stood for the emancipation of the untouchables He wrote, "I passionately desire utmost freedom of our women" He asserted continuously that woman has the same right of freedom and liberty as man He wrote, "I am uncompromising in the matter of woman's rights In my opinion she should labour under no legal disabilities not suffered by man" As a barrister, he desired the rule of law which is against all kinds of discrimination, so he was a champion for the equality of women and for their rights as human beings

Though he himself was a victim marriage, he condemned child marriage in unequivocal terms He has described in detail in his autobiography the sufferings he and his wife had to undergo

because they were married as children He writes, "The so-called marriage rite ought not longer confer legality upon an immoral and inhuman act, which consummation even at the age of 14 in my humble opinion undoubtedly is." Though the social reformers at the end of the last century campaigned against child marriage, probably no person condemned it as vehemently as Gandhi did as something immoral and inhuman

With equal vehemence he condemned widowhood of children and strongly recommended widow remarriage He was shocked at the condition of little girl who were called widows because they went through the ritual of marriage and lost their so-called husband. He wrote, ... forced widowhood upon little girls is a brutal crime for which we Hindus are daily paying dearly There is no warrant in any *Sastra* for such widowhood, voluntary widowhood, consciously adopted by a woman who has felt the affection of a partner adds grace and dignity to life, sanctifies the home and uplifts religion itself. Widowhood imposed by religion or custom is an unbearable yoke." Thus, as a person who passionately believed in the freedom of the individual, he was unequivocally against the imposition of widowhood on a girl, because of custom In fact, he went to the extent of advising the students "to make a sacred resolve that you are not going to marry a girl who is not a widow, that you will seek out a widow girl and that if you cannot get a widow girl you are not going to marry at all " Thus, he wanted to carry on two campaigns at the same time he wanted to see that little girls are not married, and he also wanted to see that young men marry the widows girl so that such a widowhood is wiped out

We can thus understand how the whole society was transformed because of this campaign adopted by Gandhi so that after freedom, there was drastic change in the legal status of the women

Continuously, he urged the women to think independently by themselves and arrive at decisions on the women to think independently by themselves and arrive at decisions on the basis of their own judgment instead of depending of man or blindly following the custom. In order to enable the illiterate women in the rural areas to develop these capacities and to think independently, he wanted the enlightened women from the cities to "enroll women as voters, impart or have imparted to them practical education, teach them to think independently, release them from the chains of caste that bind them so as to bring about a change in them which will compel man to realize woman's strength and capacity for sacrifice and give her a place of honour."

The most important thing he did, right from the years in South Africa, was to make women participate in social movements and public work As a great campaigner and leader of social and political movements he could see and realize the importance of the participation of the women who constitute 50 per cent of the population It is obvious that no movement could be popular, no movement could be a mass movement unless women participated in it The most astonishing thing is that right from the beginning women responded to his call in large numbers The very first non-cooperation movement that he launched in 1920 brought a large number of women throughout the country to participate in the movement Of course, as noted above, the new outlook among women was gradually coming in towards the end of the nineteenth century and in the beginning of the twentieth century We have seen that when Annie Besant was in Jail in 1917, women went in procession protesting against it So by 1920 when Gandhi gave the call for non cooperation to liberate the country, women came out of their homes in large numbers In August 1921, Gandhi acknowledged the services rendered by the women. He wrote in his *Young India*, "The women of India have during the past 12 month worked wonders on behalf of the motherland you have parted with your cash and with your fine jewellery, you have wandered from, house to house to make collections Some of you have even assisted in picketing. Some of you who are used to fine dress of variegated colours and had numbers of changes during the day have now adopted the white and spotless but heavy khadi saree yours is the purest sacrifice untainted by anger or hate Let me confess to you that your spontaneous and loving response all over the country has convinced me that God is with us No other proof of our struggle being one of self purification is needs than that lakhs of Indian women are actively helping it" He wanted that the women should have the same share as man in winning independence Even in 1921, when he was asked whether the participation of women in public work would not lead to the neglect of home and children, Gandhi replied, "More often than not a woman's time is taken up not by the performance of essential domestic duties but in catering to the egoistic pleasure of her lord and master and for her own vanities To me this domestic slavery of women is a sample of our barbarism It is high time that our womanhood was freed from the incubus Domestic work ought not to take the whole of a woman's time "

He wanted the women to participate in what he regarded as the vital tasks of constructive work, namely, picketing liquor shops and the shops which sold foreign clothe. He was convinced that it is only a group of women who could make an effective appeal to those engaged in the sale of liquor and foreign cloth; he was also convinced that even illiterate women could take part in, this work of conversion As a matter of fact, thousands of women, educated as well as illiterate, took part in this picketing throughout the country.

Even as early as 1921, he advocated the enfranchisement of women. He wrote, "Women must have votes and equal legal status But the problem does not end there; it only commences as the point whether, women began to affect the the political deliberation of the nation" As we will see presently, he lived to see women participating in the state Government in 1937 and in the Central Government in 1947.

Thus the ground prepared by the nineteenth century leaders and the untiring work of Gandhi led to the emancipation of women and helped them to take their rightful place in society in the way in which women of Vedic age participated in the ancient times We may now briefly describe the way in which, side by side with their participation in the national movement, women also started a separate movement to fight for their rights.

While pandita Rama Bai, Ranade, Karve and others started great institutions in Maharashtra to educate women and to help them to understand their rights in society in the latter part of the nineteenth century, it was really in the beginning of the twentieth century that new ideas swept across the country and a strong women's movement took shape. In this work three Western women played an important part They were Margaret Nobel (1867-1911), later known as Sister Nivedita, Annie Besant (1847-1933), and Margaret Cousins (1878-1954) These three women were, as Hanna Sen wrote, "Irish in origin, suffragette in sympathy and former participants in the Irish Home Rule agitation."

In 1917, some Indian ladies of the South established the Indian Women's Association in Madras and organized its branches in different parts of the country. Margaret Cousins started Streedharma in order to mould public opinion in favour of women and to educate the women about their rights, As noted above, it was in December 1917 that a deputation of women, under the leadership of Sarojini Naidu (1879 1949), presented a memorandum to Montague. the British Secretary of State of India, demanding

votes for women and also for increased educational and health facilities. This was a significant event which marked a new awakening of Indian women of their political and social rights In their address they said, "We have asked for a portion of your valuable time because the women of India have awakened to their responsibilities in public life and have their own independent opinion about the reforms that are necessary for the progress of India" They further said, "We pray that when such a franchise has been drawn up, women may be recognized as 'people' and it may be worded in such terms as will not disqualify our sex to allow our women the same opportunity of representation as our men."

The British Parliament appointed the South borough Committee in 1918 to make recommendations regarding franchise, the women of India met this Committee when it toured round India In 1918 also, the Indian National Congress as well as the Muslim League endorsed the demand of women for enfranchisement But the Committee ignored the claims of the women in its report published in 1919 It was understood that the Committee felt that franchise for women was premature on account of the social customs prevailing in India However, the women held several protest meetings in various parts of the country and sent resolutions to the Secretary of State for India in London, requesting him to carry out the expressed wishes of the Indian men and women and to enfranchise women The British Parliament appointed a Joint Select Committee to take evidence of the representative Indians on the suggested reforms when the India Bill was introduced in July 1919 All the Indian deputations which went to London to give evidence supported women's franchise Viewing this overwhelming public opinion, the Joint Select Committee decided to leave the question of women's franchise to be settled by the Legislative Councils of India in each province So the women next issued appeals to the members of the State legislative Councils In March 1921, Krishna Nair, a prominent member of the Madras Legislative Council, introduced a resolution that women should be enfranchised on the same basis as the men The resolution was *adopted by a large majority In August, the same year, a similar* resolution was adopted by the Bombay Legislative Council and in 1925 in the Bengal Council

In the meantime, the princely states of Cochin and Travancore of South enfranchised women and also nominated them to the state Legislative Council in 1920 itself

In 1926, Kamla Devi Chattopadhyaya stood for elections to the Madras Legislature and secured over 4,000 votes, but she was defeated by a narrow margin immediately afterwards, the Women's Indian Association campaigned for the nomination of at least four ladies to the legislative Council. The Government of Madras nominated Muthu Lakshmi Ammal. She was elected by the Legislature as Deputy President.

Thus, within a period of ten years from 1917, the agitation of the women of India to obtain enfranchisement in the whole country on an equal status with men bore fruit. This is one of the most outstanding social changes that took place in India fifty years ago.

In the middle of 1926, Margaret Cousins, the secretary of the Women's Indian Association, sent out an appeal to the various states in the country requesting the women leaders to hold constituent conferences in each state. During the last quarter of 1926 conferences were held in as many as 22 places. As a result of these local conferences the All-India Women's Conference was established and it held the first session in January 1927 in Poona with representatives from all over the country. Thus the women established an all-India organization to help them in their struggle for their rights. It laid down that reforms in the field of women's education was its primary objective. In its annual conference it had not only been fighting for the expansion of educational opportunities for girls and women but also established a National Education Fund and in 1932 it set up the Lady Irwin College at New Delhi to give advanced education in Home Science for women. In its 13th session, the conference spelt out its aims and objectives in a clear and comprehensive manner. In the field of social reforms it carried on a propaganda against early marriage, polygamy, excessive expenditure at the time of marriage, etc. It fought for equality in matters of property. The conference made studies about the condition of women in the factories and mines and drew the attention of the Government of the low wages and unhealthy working conditions. As early as 1932 it demanded universal adult franchise. Very early it conducted a campaign in the field of family planning to prevent over population.

The All-India Women's Conference is today a huge organization with nearly 500 sub-branches and a membership of 3 25 million. It conducts magazines and issues news letters. Another important field in which it has been active is the starting of hostels for working women in the urban areas.

The Conference has played a very important part in supporting social legislation in India It gave full support to Hanbilas Sarada and mobilized public opinion so that the Act of 1929 raising the age of marriage of girls to 14 was passed Because of its campaign the problem of the codification of Hindu Law was taken up and important legislations were passed giving equality *for the sexes during the fifties*

Thus, the close association of Indian women with the political movement enabled them to bring about radical changes in their status with the least resistance from men

As noted earlier, the Constitution of India laid down equality between sexes It also provided for special steps to be taken by the Government *to improve the condition of women* by establishing separate institutions By 1956, many laws were passed removing the inequalities between sexes There was considerable divergence between social norms and the legal norms in the first half of the twentieth century As Panikkar had noted, Hindu religion had never looked upon women as inferior In fact, woman was looked upon as the symbol of "Shakti", power and energy in the cosmos "It is the law of the Hindus and not the religion which denied women property rights, used to compel girls to marry before puberty and deny the rights to remarriage of widows Now all these three have been changed without in the least affecting Hindu religion" A radical change has been brought about in the Hindu social system *by these new laws The raising of the age of marriage by legislation* may lead to the problem of unmarried daughters which was an impossibility for more than 2,000 years Similarly, the recognition of the claim of the daughters to inherit their share in the family property has denied the very basis of the Hindu joint family In the same way the claim of the widow to an independent share in her husband's property " It will be clear from the above discussion that the claim of the daughter, the wife and the widow, to share in the property of the family involves a revolution unseen but fundamental in the Hindu life" Further, the educated woman would get the ability and confidence to form her own judgement and may not subscribe to the old ideal of looking upon the husband as a God, *patidevata.*

It is now nearly twenty years since Panikkar made this observation and since the legal changes were made But one does not see any sign of social tension as a consequence of these radical changes The whole change has been achieved and accepted so *smoothly that there has been no occasion for any conflict This is* a further proof of the ability of the Indian society to assimilate radical social changes without upsetting the social balance

A reference may be made to the problem of the purdah by way of illustration. As noted earlier, even in the pre-Muslim days, the monarchs and the nobles practised seclusion of women particularly because they indulged in polygamy. Many of the ruling princes have had, even in recent decades, large harems. With the advent of the Muslim rule in India, the social norm of purdah and the seclusion of women spread even to the middle classes, particularly in the northern parts of the country. Towards the end of the nineteenth century and in the first decades of the twentieth century, enlightened Hindus as well as Muslims campaigned for the abolition of the purdah. Apart from the social injustices involved in this practice there was the shining example of the freedom of movement among women in the whole of peninsular India from Maharashtra to Kerala In spite of this campaigning neither the Muslims nor the Hindus in the North were prepared to give it up Here also, Gandhi was a great force to bring about radical change.

Early in 1927 he wrote, "Whenever I have gone to Bengal, Bihar or United Provinces, I have observed the purdah system more strictly followed than in other provinces At Darbhanga .. I was called upon to address the ladies behind the purdah. The sight of the screen behind which my audience, whose numbers I did not know, was seated, made me sad It pained and humiliated, me deeply. I thought of the wrong being done by men to the women of India by clinging to barbarous custom which, whatever use it might have had when it was first introduced, has now become totally useless and was doing incalculable harm to the country..... Purdah is being retained even in educated household, not because the educated men believe in it themselves, but because they will not manfully resist the brutal custom and sweep it away at a stroke." A few month after this many influential women of Bihar signed an appeal for the total abolition of the purdah The appeal stated, "We want that the women of our province should be as free to move about and take their legitimate part in the life of the community in all particulars as their sisters in Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Madras, and in a essentially Indian way, avoiding all attempts at Europeanization, for while we hold that a change from enforced seclusion to a complete anglicization would be like dropping from the frying pan into the fire, we feel that the purdah must go, if we want our women to develop along the Indian ideals". In July 1928, there was an organized demonstration against purdah in many places in Bihar State At one of their meetings they passed the resolution, "We men and women of Patna

assembled, hereby declare that we have, today abolished the pernicious practice of the purdah, which has done and is doing incalculable harm to the country, and particularly to the women, and we appeal to the other women of the province who are still wavering, to banish this system as early as they can and thereby advance their education and health." The demonstration, the resolution and the "funeral of the purdah" in Patna in 1928, were given wide publicity in the country The campaign against purdah was intensified in all the other regions. Finally, the civil disobedience campaign of the thirties liberated the women from the oppressive custom of the purdah. Thus, there is clear evidence of the way in which the influence of Gandhi was able to bear fruit within a few months and enabled the men as well as the women in the Bihar State to throw away a custom which persisted through centuries However, it must be realized that even now some of the lower class illiterate Muslim women continue to observe purdah, though the Hindu women have completely given it up As noted above, this is another illustration of radical social change taking place in a smooth manner in the Indian society.

Status of Women in Muslim Society

Muslims constitute 11 Percent of India's population India has the second largest muslim population of the world Indian muslims are mostly converts from Hinduism and as such have been very much influenced by Hindu culture Religious beliefs and practices have been a universal feature of human life Thus it is not surprising that women have always had a place in religious activities, however much the degree of their participation may have varied Thus the great teachings of all religions are of crucial importance as these teachings reflect the actual position held by women in society at different times in history, on the other the teachings have in turn contributed to determining such positions by upholding a particular image or ideal women hood All religions have tried to answer some of the questions such as what is the nature of women, what is her particular role the family, her position in society at large, her situation in the general scheme of salvation Many religious books relegate the women's place to a lower or secondary to man Such texts are frequently quoted as scriptural basis for the legitimation of women's low status through the ages, they are the sacred authority which teaches that women's status

has to be low and unequal to that of man In addition we have the paradoxical situation that in some religious teachings an idealised projection of women's image in her role as mother and wife occurs, in some instances an ideal of women in her eternal essence is projected when in actual social life subjugation is women's common lot Today all the religions are faced with entirely a new challenge Since the social economic and political emancipation of women has become widely accepted, new pressures from the social environment are affecting all the religious tradition, and the inadequacy of their traditional teaching regarding the general status or image of women is being fundamentally questioned

Islam had its roots and beginnings in the tribal society of the Arabs, it is necessary to find out the position of women in Arabia, the birth place of Islam, just before the rise of Islam As the Arab society was almost a tribal one, it did not recognise the individual As Venkatrayappa say "the women of Arabia was in a state of subjection either to their nearest male kinsman or the father, brother,son or husband, whose rights over them were regarded as their rights over any other property The birth of a daughter was usually looked down upon by the Arabs, as a calamity and disgrace to the family Custom of female infanticide was prevalent. Girls were married at an early age of 7 or 8 years parents were afraid that their daughters might be dishonoured if they were not given in marriage before attaining puberty. Marriage by capture, purchase and contract existed among the Arabs Polygamy was both popular and common among them About the number of wives than an Arab could keep, there appears to have been no laws and conventions. A wife was treated as a chattel, she could be lent to a guest as a mark of hospitality.

In the pre-Islamic Arab society the husband was free to divorce his wife whenever he felt doing so but the wife did not enjoy and reciprocal right Women at that time did not have an property right as they themselves were looked upon as property. This is verified by the fact that women among pre Muslim Arabs were included in the property inherited and on father's death, a son could marry his step mother. Thus it is believed that the women in pre- Islamic society were given an inferior position and they were treated as mere property.

In this background Islam seems to be a reformative religion which impressed the status of women to great extent. The reforms instituted by Mohammad affected a vast and marked improvement in the position of women Islam restricted polygamy to four wives,

it prohibited female infanticide, assigned a share of inheritance to women. Islam declared mehr as a gift to the bride, and it reoriented the Arab Law of marriage and divorce in favour of women According to Shushtery Islam contributed to the status improve ment of women in the following ways

1 By stressing the need to respect and to give good treatment to a foster mother
2 By making women the mistress of her own property in which the husband had no right to interfere except with her permission
3 By giving her right of claiming divorce on certain grounds
4 By allowing her to hold any public office, including that of the head of an empire or minister of judge
5 By giving her freedom to remarry after divorce, and
6 By encouraging her to study and acquire knowledge

Thus Islamic writers point to the principles of the Quran and Sunnah and other religious books as evidence that women is not badly treated by Islam Mohammmad Qutb is of the opinion that as a fundamental principle of its system Islam holds that women is a human being and she has a soul similar to that of man Thus man and women were quite equal to each other in their origin, their abode as well as in their place of return and were as such entitled to similar and equal rights Islam gives her the right to life, to honour and to property like men Islam does not fix any age limit for marriage of girls, but in practice quite young children may be legally married, Chastity is very seriously safe guarded From the provisions of the Quran, in follows that for women a plurality of husbands is impossible and for them monogamy was the rule However men were allowed to keep three or four wives though the Quran warns "If you cannot deal equitably and justly with all, you shall marry only one The Quran confers on the husband the pre Islamic right to divorce his wife without assigning any cause and eved without any misbehaviour on her part, though Mohammad counselled moderation on the part of men Women were also conceded right to obtain separation on reasonable grounds Islam allows remarriage of widowed or divorced women the only restraint is that they have to wait for a period of three menstural period It was obligatory for the husband to pay to the bride Mehr before marriage, it becomes woman's property and she is recognized its heir by law. About inheritance Islam says "to the mole the equivalent of the position of two females According to

Mohammad Qutb this is quite natural and justifiable for it is the men alone who is charged with Shouldering all the financial obligations. Women can hold property in her own name and can dispose it of at her own will. According to Quranic authorities, Islam stood for making education compulsory and universal. It is prescribed in Islam that every Muslim. man and women, must receive education and must to farthest corner of the globe to acquire knowledge. Though in practice Muslim community is perhaps the most educationally backward at present and so far as women are concerned it seems that the Quranic principles and orders have been completely neglected. With regard to segregation and veiling Ilse Lichlenstandter is of the opinion that it developed out of Quranic pronouncements, though the form which gradually emerged was in no way demanded by the Quran In the Quran segregation was used to refer to a partition dividing the house never to a veil. However, Islam is more concerned for feminine modesty both of dress and demeanour. In some of the Islamic regions, a women of goods character is but seldom seen beyond the portch of her house and in many areas women appear in lanes and streets only as silent veiled figures. According to Reuben *Levy* that though Islam has treated women nicely, it has not given her equal status with man In viewing the male female roles, islam ascribes a superior status to the former. "It is foolish to claim equality for her in spheres for which she is not created Men stand superior to women in that God that preferred the one over the other" Islamic orders regarding Seclusion of women, men's right to divorce, to practice polygamy and other provisions make many believe that the position of women under Islam is inferior. According to Zarina Bhatty at every stage Muslim law is fettered with inequalities, with the women in every case being less equal.

During the four centuries after its birth, Islam was a living, creative force seeking, acquiring, assimilating, new ideas, knowledge and giving back the flavour of its own while interacting with Greek, Roman, Iraninan and Indian thought and culture. But in 12th or 13th centuries it came in powerful garb as an invanding power to conquer, prosetytize and reel instead of being the torch brarer of knowledge and humanism. The women began to be oppressed as the Muslims expanded their domains and strengthened their ruling powers, For this Historians hold the fanatical theologians who gained the upper hand responsible, and to this day they have not lost their hold to the unhappiness of the enlightened Muslims, especially the Muslim women.

Status of Muslim
Women in India

It is a matter of great sorrow that Islam came to Indian in its bigoted from specially with Purdah which became the prominent hallmark of feudalism, synonymous with high status and respectability. Its enforcement became so pervasive that any women found without a veil was ruled as shameless and outside of decent society

During the period of Muslim rule the birth of a girl was looked upon as an unfortunate and unpleasant even in the Muslim family Marriage at the age of 8 or 9 years became a common practice for the girls Settlement of marriage was entirely the concern of the parents on both sides, who agreed to the conditions of the contract and fixed the date of marriage Girls were not allowed to express their opinion regarding their marriage Dowry system became popular among the rich Muslims Divorce was commonly practised, it was quite frequently used by Muslim husbands Polygamy was also prevalent among the Muslims, especially among high class Muslims Women of the Imperial and noble families were confined to harem life, where the life of a women used to be monotonous and miserable. Women of high and well to do families were secluded by purdah, though the women from poorer sections had to work outside house for their livelihood. Purdah system isolated muslim women from the outer world and confined them to the four walls of their house

According to M Mujeeb as a whole position of women during the Moghal period was definitely inferior, the women were not generally considered full persons whose advice was to be sought and experience relied upon, and conclusions were drawn from this belief by men according to their temperament and culture Though there were distinguished who not only ruled but personally led victorious armies into battle like Razia Sultan and Chand Bibi Nur Jehan not only practically ran the empire but personally led a rescue porty when her husband was captured Jahan Ara, daughter of Shah Jahan was known for her literary talents Humayun's sister was famed for her outstanding life story of her father

After the disintegration of the Moghul empire, even the upper class women got degraded Modern education among the muslims gained prominence with Sir Syed Khan's efforts But this noted reformer and educationist was openly a firm opponent of women's

education In the 20th century, a number of laws were passed, like the child marriage Restraint Act (Common to all), the Dissolution of Muslim marriage Act of 1939, to improve the condition of women to safe guard them from the preveling evil practices.

According to Imtiaz Ahmad sociological research focussing specifically on Muslim communities in different parts of the country would have provided a corrective to the tendency to describe Muslim social institutions in terms of stated islamic ideals or to accept the ideal position as a statement of fact without bothering to look at the empirical reality He maintains that while a considerable body of empirical research by sociologist and social anthropologists has appeared on social institutions in India during the last two decades, both the quantum and range of sociological information on Muslims in India continue to remain scanty. It is indeed so scanty that writers from entirely opposed persuasions have found it possible to argue their conflicting positions without much difficulty. Further more relative paucity of dependable sociological data about the social institutions, religious beliefs and attitudes and values of Muslims has allowed a wide variety of popular stereotypes about them to persist and to argued out.

Education of Muslim Women in India

Education is an indispensable meaks for helping the Muslim women out of their economic misery because economic dependency is the major factor contributing to the low status of Muslim women After independence women's education made considerable progress in India The number of girls' schools and colleges increased Muslim girls going to schools and colleges also increased slowly but steadily. Muslim girls going to schools and colleges also increased slowly but steadily. Muslim parents are becoming anxious to educate their daughters along with their sons Village girls are going to schools while in towns many of them are seeking higher education. Still Muslim women are changing very gradually, sometimes, the change is painfully slow Because for a long time Muslim women have remained secluded and have lived the life of submission so most of them dislike the idea of change According to Indu Menon, another factor which hinders the progress of education among Muslim women is that a majority of the Muslim still live in joint families, where women reside in separate part of

the house called zanana Though now the educated section of the Muslim population has begun to develop a dislike for the joint family which restricts the freedom of the individual and suppresses individuality.

Another important factor is that a large group of Muslim women still use purdah and they accept the seclusion on the basis of custom and tradition It has been found that low status muslims consider purdah as a mark of prestige Some of the empirical enquiries have proved that poor muslims after prosperity tend to observe more purdah, they do not think that purdah is old fashioned

Even though these factors hinder the advancement of female education and freedom of movement, still the advantages of female education are being increasingly appreciated A lot of books, news papers, articles have stressed that educated women would make more suitable wives and matters to modern educated male generations The earliest girls schools were openen at Aligarh and Lucknow Educated Muslim women every where show the tendency towards increasing economic independence The awareness of the need to become financially independent and to supplement family income, forces Muslim women to accept jobs outside home However, when compared to the Hindu counterparts the number of employed Muslim women is smaller In Rural areas muslim women are engaged in farm work and other productive activities and as such they enjoy more respect and freedom Education is the key which has contributed and accelerated the emergence of women as an important factor in all societies Available literature indicates that there is a close relationship between the spread of female education on the one hand and the development of women's status on the other But in Muslim communities it is found that though encouragement has been given to Muslim women in matter of education and other activities which education envisages, Muslim women have not been able to take full advantage of them, largely due to the nominance of social structural and institutional factors in Islam such as early marriage, polygamy, unilateral divorce segregation, veiling etc , which impede their utilization in full.

Muslim women of the world are expected to avoid wearing scanty apparel and to limit their public activities In some islamic regions, a women of good character is seldom Seen beyond the portals of one, and in many areas women appear in lanes and streets only as silent veiled figures Koranic proscriptions are often

cited by devout Muslims as the basis of observance of purdah by Muslim women, and certain of the prophets recorded words do seem to recommend some imitations to feminine activity and dress. The concept of modestly is central to the ideology of purdah as well as to all other rules governing women's dress and behaviour.

Small children are allowed to run about without any concern for their dress but all girls above the age of seven or eight wear clothing covering the from shoulder to ankle. From early childhood girls are taught to play with other girls rather with boys It is unseemly for older girls or women to spend time chatting with males other than close kinsmen, purdah among muslim women has rendered the task of systematic observation and empirical data collection very difficult. According to A.R. Saiyed the difficulties of fact finding in this area have either compelled social scientists to desist from dealing with the actual situation concerning to the position Her seclusion. isolation and segregation have in one stroke, as it were, nullified the rights that have been granted to her In face of the disabilities that purdah has bestowed upon the muslim women, her rights and privileges have virtually remained unsering and unapplauded, Indian Muslims have traditionally been staunch supporters of purdah especially the Muslims of Delhi and U.P 'who have been the reference models for most of the Indian Muslims Though to some extent process of modernization has influenced Muslim women also In metropolitan areas rigours of purdah have been relaxed to some extent Young school and college girls leave their homes in the Muslim Mohallas clad in burqas which are either removed on reaching a sufficiently safe distance from one's mohalla or upon reaching one's institution, or a placer of work Thus social and psychological restriction associated with purdah continue to operate, and, as of now changes in from have not yet been accompanied by changes in content On account of purdah traditionally nothing is expected from women outside of the domestic sphere and even in this sphere very specific roles are assigned to her The narrow concept of the daughter and wife roles led to de emphasizing of any normal education among females One ¹atent effect of the denial of education to women has been the perpetuation of the lowly position of the muslim women and her acceptance of it Further, seclusion and isolation have forced the muslim women into a limited circle of interaction, which has denied her the opportunity of learning to function as a mature and confident individual, who is aware of her rights and privileges and can struggle to prevent heir violation

Purdah and seclusion makes attainment of education for Muslim women a difficult goal to be achieved, and it has also restrained the Muslim women make significant economic contribu tions, either towards her own independence or towards the economic viability of the family As a result muslim community suffers more economic deprivations. The purdah bound mother is also a poor educator of her children and generally fails to motivate them towards higher levels of educational aspirations and achievements This failure also prevents the upward mobility of the family Indeed one may go to the extent of suggesting that a major factor in the generally backward economic condition of most indian Muslims is purdah Because, backwardness of women in family ultimately influences the whole community as Rossi has observed social and personal life is impoverished for some part of many men's lives because so many of their wives live in a perpetual state of intellectual and social impoverishment

Muslim Women
Marriage and Family

Unlike among Hindus, marriage among the Muslims is a contract and not a sacrament Muslim marriage is known as 'Nikah' According to Mohammadan Law the main objective of Nikah is procreation and legalisation of children, The elements in Muslim marriage are

1 A proposal made by or on behalf of the parties

2 An acceptance of the proposal, in the presence and hearing of two uncle or one mala and two female witnesses

3 Settlement of dower

Muslim law is discriminatory against women as according to law a male can have as many as four wives while women cannot have more than one husband A Muslim man can marry a non-muslim woman but a woman cannot marry a non muslim man

According to most observers, the largest number of bigamous marriages found among Indian muslims or the cases in which the husband abandons his first wife and goes off to marry another women Most of the people do not divorce their wives who are legally bound to them thus they avoid paying the Mahr—to the abondoned wife, and the wife is forced to adjust with other wife because of economic compulsions she is not able to leave the

husband's place Women are generally weak and suffer from disabilities, it is very difficult for them to secure justice through a court of law Thus provisions of polygamy are abused by the men against muslim women People lacking in the necessary financial means taking two wives eventually deny financial support to the first wife and thus cause her much suffering The arbitrary power of the Muslim male to have more one wife has been controlled almost in all the Islamic countries The reforms in the Islamic countries have been made keeping in view the fact that Muslim husbands are not able to maintain even one wife and her children

Early marriage is also very common among the Muslims It creates problems in acquiring education for women. From the early childhood whole socialization for female child is to train her for her future roles of wife and mother. All daughters are said to be par gharai meaning for some one else's house. This belief compels the parents to get their daughter married as soon as they reach marriageable age Traditionally marriages are arranged by the parents and liking and disliking of the spouses is not regarded crucial Under the Muslim law for the validity of marriage both the body and girl must be of sound minds

Muslim women after marriage are not allowed to move out without escort, as a result they can not continue their education after marriage, position of Muslim women in economic and occupational spheres cannot improve unless they get the opportunity of education, learning and training Traditional Muslim women receive dower (Mehr) at the time of marriage which varies according to capacity of the family. Under the Islamic law a woman can refuse her husband to a carnal connection until she has received her dower from his, so that her right to the return may be maintained in the same manner as that of her husband to the objection for which the return is given

Divorce–The Muslim law gives unlimited rights of divorce to the Muslim husband and the Quran enjoins the husband to retain his wife with kindness or separate with kindness. But in practice the power is enjoyed by the husband Considerable Muslim husbands possess the arbitrary power of divorce They can divorce their wives at any time, without giving any reason. Were if wife wants divorce she can ask for it only on the grounds of importance of husband, and cruelty. According to Mohammad A. Qureshi-Muslim law is not in favour of women It therefore, needs immediate re interpretation According to one interpretation, the Muslim husbands have acquired arbitrary power of divorce by way of

custom The Quran or the traditions of Brophet Mohammad has nowhere authourised the Muslim husbands to dissolve their marriage arbitrarily Changes in these customs and traditions can be brought about only when Muslim women themselves become conscious According to Qureshi,it is the duty of progressive Muslim intellectuals to explain to the Muslim masses the true character of Muslim personal law and philosophy and inculcate in their minds a spirit of toleration towards all religions and attitudes, of responsiveness to the call of modernising and rationalising the provisions of personal law The Muslim intellectuals should undertake the job of educating Muslim masses A uniform civil code will not be achieved until and unless the Muslim masses area awakened In the economic and occupational spheres, the position of Muslim women continuous to be one of the definite subordination to men To begin with, a daughter is entitled to half the share of *the property of her father as the son The right of a widow to* inherit her husband's property is negligible even when the couple haven children Though entitled to the enjoyment and disposal of her personal property in her own way, *seclusion at home* makes her utterly dependent on the husband in the matter of use and disposal of their property

Thus the structure of Muslim family is not conductive to women's freedom The major stumbling block it keeps wones indoors, not permitting them to mix freely with society as other women Womens associations and organizations should be encouraged by the state to improve the position of women The problem of subordination of women in Muslim community has to be looked at from larger angel of Women of all the communities suffer subordination, while in context of Muslim women law has also been made discriminatory, public opinion should be mobilized on this issue, this is all the more necessary for Muslim women as unfavourable climates exists in the Muslim community for the *solution of this problem*

Status of Christian Women

The image of women in christianity, is far from being uniform, it always include several aspects At certain times, some traits may become more prominent than other due to extraneous reasons From a survey of christian tradition the conclusion can be drawn that there exists no fully adequate, christian model of women which could meet modern women's requirements

The advent of the western countries and church mission often working together made a different orientation to the role of christianity in India There English missionaries were socially more liberal and they applied themselves to social reforms. They were active in putting a stop to customs like sati, female infanticide christians emphasize importance of education, and opportunities of education and progress are equally shared by women also. Thus through education christian community led the progress and modernization for the community. Christians stand against polygamy, purdah, sati an child marriage from which both the major communities in India have suffered and which have a damaging effect on the status of women. Equal educational opportunities to christian women provided her greater chance of progress and development There opportunities eventually lead women towards equal status, and equal participation in social and economic development of the community and the nation

The most important provision of to christian marriage Act is that a marriage be registered The christian law of Marriage and Divorce 1872, is only concerned with the form in which the marriage is solemnized and does not deaL with the form in which the marriage is solemnized and does not deal with objection to the validity of the marriage Age of marriage among christian is quite higher providing education to women also led to women taking to professions and salaried jobs, thereby to wider economic independence, while their Muslim and Hindu counterparts suffer from economic dependence In inheritance the christian women labored under disadvantages The Cochin christian law gave the daughter only one third of that of son, while the Travancore Act gave only one fourth Still because of higher education and greater chances of employment position of christian women is much better, though in some cases, christians have kept some old Hindu customs, in particular, observance of ¬stes which was a blot on its otherwise liberal tenets

Thus basic factors which determine the change in the status of women can be identified in following order. The largest single factor affecting the status of women today is the changing family pattern coupled with the increased access to formal education, even though the percentage of women in higher education is still considerably low Earlier it was found that a girl's education might diminish her marital prospects, now we have a development whereby education provides additional prestige and represents and important to marriage Thus absence of education puts the Muslim

women at disadvantageous position In traditional society women had always worked in economic unit of family, when their work was under-estimated, while in industrialized society they are employed outside house, receiving monetary awards Marriage is now treated as partnership by women in the process mutual adjustment towards equal status is desired by women Thus the development of factors which influence the status of women positively are painfully slow in context of Muslim women It has retarded over all development of Muslim women

Status of Women
in the British Period

    Sati, infanticide, slavery, child marriage, the prohibition of window remarriage and the lack of women's rights were some of the social problems which attracted the attention of the British Raj and social reformers In the beginning of nineteenth century, the practice of sate was confined to Hooghly Nadia and Burdwan districts of Bengal, Ghazipur of Uttar-Pradesh and Shahabad of Bihar It was found in other parts of India, but only as a rare phenomenon In southern India, it was practised in Ganjam, Masulim patnam and Tanjore districts, In Rajasthan, Punjab and Kashmir the practice was confined mainly to women of high caste In Delhi, Charles Metcalfe stopped the practice Aligarh and Agra seldom had occurrences of sati In Bengal alone three-fourths of the total occurrences of sati occurred in British India In occurred among all castes, but it was more among the Brahmanas and Rajputs Among the princely families, the sense of pride and heroism elevated the sati into a noble act. But, on the whole, the rite was *practised by women whose husbands belonged to the middle and lower middle classes* The following factors could be attributed *to the practice of sate*. (1) the *position of women in the* Hindu system, (2) the institution of polygamy, specially among the kulin Brahmins, (3) the enforced widowhood and austerity, (4) social convention, (5) the sense of salvation attached to the rite, and (6) antiquity and adoration of the practice

    The British had shown interest in the abolition of sati in 1813 The persuasive propaganda techniques failed *to prevent the* occurrence of the practice The police also did not prove effective Ram Mohan Roy took it *upon himself to eradicate this social evil* He announced that the rite of sati was not a part of the Shashtras. Sati was not an integral of the Hindu religion A number of religious

leaders opposed Ram Mohan Roy's crusade against sati Through the cooperation of the princes, it was virtually stopped in the princely states, but it was not made an illegal act for a long time Even today, occurrences of sati are reported from various districts of Rajasthan In the majority of cases, the police have either reached late or remained ineffective

Female infanticide was found mainly among the Rajputs of Benaras, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan and in parts of Punjab and Sind and among some Sikhs The institution of female infanticide arose due to (1) the deplorable position of women in Hindu society, (2) the dowry system, (3) hypergamy, and (4) the sense of honour and pride, Marriage of a female is considered compulsory, In 1779, infanticide was declared to be murder by the Bengal Regulation X-XI. In 1804, this was extended to other parts of India However, the practice continued in secret till recently, particularly among the Rajputs in Rajasthan. Dowry was its main cause

Child marriage is prevalent even today among the rural people and among the urban illiterate and poor. The institution of child marriage is also the result of hypergamy, dowry, the notion of virginity chastity, etc. It has resulted in the problems of over-population, poverty, unemployment, ill health, dependence upon parents, etc The first legislation was passed in 1860 under which the minimum age for consummation of marriage in the case of girls was raised to ten. In 1891, the age of consent for girls was raised to twelve, and in 1925 to thirteen for married girls and fourteen for unmarried ones In 1929, the Child Marriage Restraint Act (Sharda Bill) was passed Under this act, the minimum age of marriage for girl was fixed at fourteen and for a boy at eighteen This act came into being in 1930 According to the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955, the minimum age age for a bride is fifteen, and for a bridegroom eighteen The legislations have not proved effective in this case Education, economic pressures, and migration to towns and cities from rural areas have certainly contributed to the raising of the age at marriage of both the sexes

Slavery was of two types : (1) domestic, and (2) predial (*agricultural*) There were also the institution of the *nautch* (dance) girl and prostitutes The latter was found particularly in the princely states Predial slavery was found in Bengal, Madras, Assam, Coorg and southern Bombay. The slaves of this category were insolvent debtors. Some of them were migrants from Rajputana Even slaves were sold out. There was also the practice of

entering a contract by a person to work for a specific period of time either to pay the debt or to have a fresh one Domestic slavery was confined to females The foreigners also indulged in the purchase of children in a clandestine manner and exported them overseas Proclamations were made in Bengal, Madras Bombay etc to prevent the institution of slavery Today, the institution exists in the form of bonded labour It is known by different names in different states The British policy of apparent and selective non-interference in social matters encouraged the institution of slavery and other institutions which supported this evil

With the efforts of Ram Mohan Roy and Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, the Hindu Widows Remarriage Act was passed in 1856 In 1861, a Widow Marriage Association was formed The Arya Samaj gave to priority to this programme The following legislations haven enhanced the status of *Hindu women in matters of marriage adoption and inheritance* (1) the Hindu Law of Inheritance (Amendment Act) of 1929, (2) the Hindu Women's Right to Property Act of 1937m (3) the Hindu Marriage Disability Removal Act of 1946 (4) the Special Marriage Act of 1954, (5) the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 (6) the Hindu Succession Act and the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act of 1956, (7) the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, (8) the Maternity Benefits Act, 1961 (9) the Equal Remuneration Act, 1976, and (10) the Criminal Law Amendment, 1983

The institution of bigamy has come to an end Today both sexes have the right to a civil marriage The age without parents' consent has been increased to 18 for girls and 21 for boys Thus, monogamy, judicial separation, nullity and divorce are some of the *salient features of the post Independence era which put man and woman on an equal platform Inheritance, adoption and divorce* (even consent) *have enhanced women's status in India* These reforms have a long history, and are outcome of the efforts of several reformists through various movements which they lunched in the pre Independence period

A Question for Equality

Woman's quest for equality with man has become universal It has given birth to women's movements and feministic activities and associations All over the world, feminism has its origin in social structure Several constraints, such as inequalities between men and women and discrimination against women, have been age old issues For a long time women remained within the four walls

of their households. Their dependence on menfolk, was total. Educated women in particular and the poor ones in general realised the need for taking up employment outside the household. In recent years, the middle class women have taken up the issue of price-rise and have launched anti-price-rise movements in various cities of India. Within the household, women have demanded equality with men. What exists for men in demanded for women. This demand for equality with men speaks of a notion of men's tyrannical hegemony.

Women have hardly any choice but to adopt an independent path for their upliftment. They want to have equality within the framework of the existing highly rigid patriarchal society. Further, women want to have for themselves the same strategies of change which menfolk have had over the centuries. But why do women want to follow in the footsteps of men ? Our experience shows that even earning women give their earnings to their mothers in-law and husbands, rather than spending the same independently. This again speaks of the deep-rooted patriarchal normative orientation. However, this does not mean that women have always followed men in all respects in their households. Women participated in India's national movement for freedom from British rule. Many of them worked with Gandhiji in the pre-Independence period. Today women's organisations, woman social workers and politicians have taken up the issues of price rise. dowry, rape, exploitation, etc. to seek equal status with men and a dignified life. Women have demanded their share of jobs in the police and other such services. Women's organisations have created a sense of consciousness for gender equality, particularly in the urban areas.

Consequent upon these urgent social problems connected with women International Women's Day. International Women's Year conferences and Seminars on women, and women's studies have been instituted in a big way since the late 1960s and 1970. The provisions made in the Constitution of India regarding equality of women with men have also been widely popularised by these organisations and associations. A not able development was the appointment in 1971 by the Government of India of the Committee on the Status of Women. The committee submitted its report in 1974. The report of the Committee was very widely welcomed. There is also an All-India Association of Women's Studies. Demonstrations, processions and strikes against rape, dowry deaths and the murder of women have become a regular feature in Delhi Bombay and other cities. Rape is generally committed by upper

caste and class landowners, moneylenders, police officials and government functionaries, besides by anti- social elements Dowry has become a sort of market mechanism among the urban middle class, the lower middle class and the upper caste, economically well- off rural people In case of dowry deaths, suicides and extortion, the parents of the girls as well as the girls themselves suffer indignities and in human treatment

Andre Beteille makes some valuable observations about the position of woman in peasant families He asks, "How are we to view families in which men work in the fields but women are by custom debarred from such work ?" This is found among the families of the upper castes Even some families of the intermediate and of the lower castes who have become economically well off have adopted this norm with a view to elevate their social status in the village community This does not mean that these women, who do not work or have been stopped from working on farms, are given treatment equal to the men in their families, The status of the family within the community is one thing, and the status of the individual members within the family is quite, another There is an elaborate sex-based division of labour in rural families However, this too varies from caste to caste, and also depends upon the economic and social standing of particular families Beteille *comments upon the process of change in the status of women in* the context of manual labour He very rightly states, Women are first withdrawn from wage employment on the farms of others They are then withdrawn from the family farm. Finally, the men either withdraw from work, or change their role from cultivator to supervisor " Thus, withdrawing womenfolk from manual work on farms is a symbol of high status in the countryside But this is *not true of working women belonging to upper and upper middle* or even to the lower middle classes in towns and cities Working unmarried women are considered an asset, as they can be married without much difficulty and with less dowry

Men-Women Relationship

Can there be an expression of women's identity independent of men ? Ideologically yes, and practically no Meenakshi Mukherjee rightly observes that social conformity has always been *more* obligatory for a woman than for a man Generally a woman's identity tends to be defined, by herself as well as by others, in terms of her relationship with men as a daughter, a wife a mother This was also true of women in Europe in the nineteenth century,

Today women in China enjoy status almost equal to men. Chairman Mao said, "The day all women in China stand on their feet is the time for victory for the Chinese revolution. Times have changed, and today men and women are equal. Whatever men comrades can accomplish, Women comrades can too." Feudal ways of thinking and acting were strongly attacked to elevate women's position in Chinese society. Old beliefs about women's in inferiority were discarded. Equal pay for equal work is the practice today in China

Women's bondage to men and to the social structure is a characteristic feature of capitalism. and emancipation of women from such ties is referred to as a feature of socialism Employment for women is not a panacea for solving their problems. Women among the lower sections of society are found engaged in several economic activities, and yet they are more enslaved to their menfolk, Similarly to look at women in terms of literate versus illiterate, rich versus poor, and rural versus urban illiterate, rich versus poor, and rural versus urban would not give a proper understanding of women's plight in today's Indian Women, in fact, cannot be understood independent of men. The family alone has not been enslaving women. The ethos of society has been such that women have been treated rather shabbily. Leon Trostsky once remarked, "there are no limits to masculine egotism In order to understand the world we must look at it through the eyes of women."

Today the emphasis in women's studies is not on the status of women, their degradation, social customs, the role of women in the family, community and tradition. but it has shifted to education, economic and legal status of women political participation, etc Nowadays, instead of studying their attitudes, roles and status the causes of women's subordination, work participation women in movements, patriarchal structure and women in relation to socio-economic and political structure are being taken up as crucial issues concerning women age and sex are not simply biological phenomena, they are social and cultural variables too, and in some societies these are considered the basis of distribution of rewards and privileges

It is necessary to have "empathy" to study the position of women for a scientific understanding of their problems, the device of "role taking" is adopted This means placing oneself in the position of women rather than simply expressing sympathy with them women working within their own households as dependent

members children and old men by and large constitute a common category against the active and earning male members Such a *situation is found in India where a great deal of concern has been* expressed for familial bonds, collective responsibilities and emotional ties for kinship relations

Women's Struggle Against Exploitation and Oppression

In recent years, a number of women's movements have emerged, characterised by acting, theorising and mobilising Are these movements class struggles or are they emancipation *movements? Another related question is, how should one link the* struggle for the liberation of the working class with that for the emancipation of women? The women's movement like the students' movement so far, is more or less middle-class oriented The systems of sexism and male chauvinism are more or less universal in all organisations Thus, there is a close connection between male dominance and patriarchalism in the family and capitalist *exploitation in the larger society*

The women's movement is organised by white collar middle class women and social workers from among upper and upper middle class non working women Feminist publications such as *Manushi Bayya, Mahila Andolan patrika, Feminist Network* and several other publications are run by women's organisations managed by urban middle and upper middle class women Women's conferences and seminars in Delhi, Bombay and Pune have now become a regular means of mobilising working women in particular to achieve equality with men Intra house-hold discrimination, women's economic status, their work situations, occupational patterns, etc have become focal themes of these seminars It has been mentioned in the discussions held in these seminars that women in India receive less consideration and money than is *required to meet their needs and responsibilities within the* household and then less is their right. One view is that there is economic basis for sexual discrimination within the family Women can be compared to some extent with the urban proletariat and the poor peasant in terms of their exploitation women do a lot of work at home which they are not paid for Even working women do not enjoy independent status as they are made to carry the burden of household work actually to be done by their in laws and husbands

Some women protagonists have mentioned four major forms of the struggle of women for greater control over their lives. These are; (1) women have organised (through mass movements) consciousness raising groups, women's centres, etc. These are meant for greater control over their bodies (for example, against rape, for free and safe contraceptives and abortions), for political right like suffrage, against oppression in the family, against pornography, etc. (2) women have fought through unions for improvement in their standards of living and in conditions of work; (3) women have organised themselves for social recognition and remuneration for their work as house wives; and (4) they have also worked for housing, and against political repression, price-rise etc. But all these issues mainly concern the urban women

Exploitation of women in the countryside has not received proper attention. The question is; Do women have a self and identity in a male dominated society ? Two images of women are fount; (1) of the strong and resilient woman, and (2) of the suffering and tolerant woman. Both the images are unrealistic, as they do not refer to women as oppressed, suppressed members of the family, and see them chiefly as weaker human beings. Women are protesting against forcible sexual contact with men. A woman's willingness is her prerogative

Women's Identity as People

The identity of women is generally defined by her role within the family. She is identified as a daughter, daughter-in-law, mother, mother-in-law, wife, etc and not as a person. She has no independent connections, friends and relatives outside her family. Her only friends, relatives and connections are those of the menfolk of the family, becoming hers by implication and not by voluntary choice. She therefore has a subordinate status in the family. However, there are various degrees of women's identities, depending upon caste and class background of her family.

Is a women a person? A woman bows down to her husband's desires even if she is unwilling to do so. she does not have "gender justice" or equality with man. Whenever a woman has expressed her identity as a person, she has been put to a lot of hardship "Forced sex" or "restoration of conjugal rights" contribute to a large extent to the violence against women. Dowry harassment and bride burning have sprung up as violence against women. The

institutions of joint family and hypergamy need a reorientation The joint family home for example, is a place where the daughter-in-law is treated as as "outsider" and a "servant" of the family, She becomes an object of scolding and ridicule for everyone in the family Hypergamy demands the marriage of a girl within the framework of caste endogamy and clan exogamy with a boy belonging to a family of higher status Due to hypergamy and the higher value attached to the boy among the Hindus, dowry has become the price for a boy

Several legislations have been passed by the Government of India since Independence regarding marriage, inheritance of property, divorce, dowry, rape, etc , in addition to what was incorporated in the constitution regarding equality and against discrimination based on religion, race, cast, sex, etc Social legislations have not been very effective in India The Dowry Act and the act against rape have been vociferously discussed over the last few years in courts and on public platforms, but rape continues unabated The victims are particularly the poor and the Dant women Dowry harassment and torture wife burning and suicides due to torture are continuing unchecked The victims of dowry harassment and torture are women from among the upper caste, middle and lower middle class families in cities and towns The institution of *anulom vivah* (hypergamy) has become deep seated among the upper and some upper middle caste and class groups This has created a sort of indirect competition among parents of girls to find a match who belongs to a superior family, and whose educational and job status is high

It is accepted that women are in no way inferior to men Women have contributed a lot to India's development They participated in the freedom struggle against the British Raj They did a lot of social work in those very difficult day of Indian history Women are exploited despite their immense contribution to the national cause They are generally found in the unorganised sector, hence their oppression and exploitation Technological advancement has affected women adversely as they have now less control over resources within the family and other sectors of their employment Advancement in the fields of agriculture, dairy development fisheries and domestic technology has reduced the economic authority and the general status of women Men have become less dependent upon women even in domestic affairs The gap between

men and women has further widened. The major areas of hiatus
between men and women are for example. in literacy, education
and training women's employment. female mortality, health care
and medical services. Female mortality is higher than male
mortality. Women are lagging behind men in these areas because
of India's social and cultural heritage and strong tradition. of
patriarchy and male-domination.

8

PLANNED CHANGE
DIRECTIONS AND MAJOR PROGRAMMES

Planning in India

The idea of planning society is really ancient, because Plato gave his proposal for a planned society long ago in his book *The Republic*

In the present century there have been several attempts to bring about a great social change by persistent and planned effort The USSR has brought about a tremendous social change on the basis of a planned effort These efforts are continuing even now Hitler brought deliberate social change in Germany during the thirties After World War II, American armies which occupied Germany had to bring about further social change in Germany more or less in a planned way Similarly, during the thirties a great change was brought about by Japan which led to World War II and the occupation by the Japanese of practically the whole of South East Asia Here again, the Americans had to bring about planned social change when they occupied Japan at the end of the war.

During 1920-42, Gandhi brought about great social change in India By his speeches, by his ashrams, by establishing volunteer training camps in various parts of the country, he caused a tremendous change in social outlook as well as in self-reliance among the classes and the masses in India

Since Independence, the Indian people as well as the Indian Government have been trying to bring about a social change through planned effort The very framing of the Constitution was guided by noble ideals of social equality and social justice The aims of the successive Five-Year Plans as well as of the Community Projects have also been the same

Before we proceed further it may be useful to discuss the possibility of planned social change from the theoretical standpoint At the outset itself, we must realize that social change is a vast complex *phenomenon involving many aspects and areas* It is obvious that no attempt could be made to change the society in all its aspects Social phenomena are so complex that any change that is introduced with a particular aim may result in so many other changes which were not anticipated even distantly Thus, the aim of a *planned social change should be to bring about a limited change in certain aspects*

Broadly, there are two aspects of social change, namely, (a) changes in the social structure itself bringing about changes in the pattern of social relations, and (b) changes in the attitude and motivations or changes in the values themselves

There is yet another aspect of social behaviour which is of great significance in this connection. Social behaviour is partly national and partly non-rational. The child as well as the adult behaves in a particular way because such behaviour is looked upon as the "right way" of behaving. There are so many internal as well as external pressures in the society making us to conform to certain ways of behaviour.

There are also aspects of social behaviour which are due to realistic considerations. A man behaves in a particular way because he can achieve some tangible result. We become members of voluntary organizations because of our friends or relatives; in other words, because of non-rational reasons or because we expect certain results to flow from the factor membership—rational considerations. Thus, it must be realized that many aspects of social behaviour are not governed by considerations of efficiency alone, and so are not amenable to rational consideration. It will be futile to expect changes in this regard on the basis of rational calculations. It is only in the limited area where rational considerations prevail that a planned change is possible.

We can now examine the concept of planning. Planning is a rational activity. It presupposes that an endeavour is made to bring about certain changes which are considered to be more efficient and more worthwhile. Thus, social planning involves a certain consensus in the whole society or, at any rate, in a large majority. People must consider that a the situation in which they live is unsatisfactory, that it is possible to change the situation so that it becomes more satisfactory, and are prepared to put forth the necessary effort and to make the necessary sacrifice in order to change the situation in which they find themselves Such a consensus is necessary both in democratic planning and in totalitarian planning. The only difference is that in totalitarian planning people have faith or fear in the dominant minority and allow them to set the goal and draw the blue-print while in democratic planning there is participation by the people through the representative institutions in the setting up of the goal and in the drawing up of the blue-prints.

However, whether it is democratic planning or totalitarian planing, when once the goals are accepted, they must be enforced by the government.

Let us now consider the attempts made in India in the last quarter century to bring about a planned change. At the outset, it must be remembered that the framers of the Constitution them-

selves have set certain goals in the Constitution emphasizing certain social objectives, namely, equality of status and opportunity, social justice, liberty of thought and expression, etc Article 38, for instance, states that "the State shall strive to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting as effectively as it may a social order in which justice, social, economic and political shall inform all the institutions of national life" These social objectives have provided a framework for the National Development Plans

The First Five Year Plan itself clearly enunciates that there are two main aims, namely, increased productivity, which is economic, and a reduction of inequalities, which is social To quote the Plan, "The Central objective of planning in India is to raise the standard of living of the people and to open out to them opportunities for a richer and more varied life" It also affirmed "Planning must therefore aim both at utilizing more effectively the resources, human and material, available to the community so as to obtain from them a larger output of goods and services and also *at reducing inequalities of income, wealth and opportunity*"

Thus, the social objectives of the Plan are to reduce inequalities of income and wealth on the one hand and to open out to the people opportunities for a richer and more varied life on the other The planners boldly assert that "the framework itself has to be remoulded so as to secure progressively for all members of the community, full employment, education, security against sickness, and other disabilities and adequate income," Thus, the aim of the First Plan was to bring about a change in the social structure itself so that through education and full employment, it is possible for the individual to participate in full in the economic as well as in social life

In fact, the First Plan proceeded to set - up a social criterion when it asserted "the programme of development will, under the last analysis, be judged in terms of the improvement it is able to make to the welfare of the community" As regards the indices for this welfare it set out that they are "the levels of income, consumption and employment" Thus, there is no doubt that the First Plan aimed at a tremendous change both in social structure and in social attitudes and values by increasing the production and by altering the structure of the economy

It was also very clear that such structural changes in the economy as well as in the society could be achieved only by public opinion and public cooperation Unless there is confidence in the community that that National Plan aims at achieving, a social

order in which there will be equal opportunity to all citizens; there cannot be any success in the effort Consequently, the planners suggested an extensive and intensive use of the mass media in order to help the people to understand the importance f the Plan and to cooperate in implementing it. It went on to assert, "Thus, the people become partners in the Plan and are associated closely with its formulation as well as in its implementation from stage to stage "

In 1954, the Parliament declared that the broad objective of economic policy should be to achieve the "socialistic pattern of society" This was implemented in the text of the Third Plan which was written in 1960 and the first section was entitled, "Social Objectives of Planning " It asserted, "The existing social and economic institutions have therefore to be judged in relation to their role in National Development To the extent they do not fulfill the social purposes in view, they have to be transformed or replaced " Thus, the planners have been quite radical in their aim to change the social structure through economic development

The 1966 draft outline of the Fourth Plan was, however, quite critical of the achievements of the Third Plan But it expressed satisfaction that the Third Plan had significantly expanded and diversified the production structure and laid the foundations for social progress, by expanding opportunities for education and by widening the provision of health services

While it is true that the primary aim of the successive Five-Year Plans is economic development, it must bear knowledges that on the basis of the review given above, the planners were throughout conscious that the ultimate aim should be a drastic change in social structure

The Fourth Plan asserts : "Democratic values are given effect to by encouraging the growth of a feeling of participation of the small man, the promotion of enterprise among the disadvantaged classes and the creation of a sense of involvement in the transformation of society among all of the community The broad objectives of planning could thus be defined as rapid economic development accompanied by continuous progress towards equality and social justice and the establishment of a social and economic democracy."

"The Fourth Plan (1969-74) aimed at accelerating the tempo of development in conditions of stability and reducing fluctuations in agricultural production as well as the impact of uncertainties of foreign aid It aimed at raising the standard of living of the people through programmes which at the same time were designed to promote equality and social justice. The plan laid particular

emphasis on improving the condition of the less privileged and weaker sections of the society, especially through the provision of employment and education Efforts were also directed towards reduction of concentration and a wider diffusion of wealth, income and economic power."

The Fifth-Year Plan was formulated at a time when the economy was facing severe inflationary pressures The major objectives of the Plan were to adopt measures for raising the consumption standards of the people below the poverty line. The Plan also gave high priority to bringing inflation under control and to achieve stability in the economic situation, and targeted an annual growth rate of 5 5 per cent in National Income

The Sixth Five-Year Plan (1980-85) has been formulated after taking into account the achievements and shortcomings of the past three decades of planning Removal of poverty is the foremost objective of the Plan even though it is recognised that the task of this magnitude cannot be accomplished in a short period of five years

The strategy adopted for this Plan consists essentially in moving simultaneously towards strengthening the infrastructure for both agriculture and industry, so as to create conditions for an accelerated growth in investments, output and export and provide through special programmes designed for the purpose, increased opportunities for employment, especially in the rural areas and the unorganized sector and meet the minimum basic needs of the people Stress is laid on dealing with interrelated problems, through systematic approach rather than in separate compartment, on greater management efficiency and intensive monitoring in all sectors and active involvement of the people,e in formulating specific schemes of development at the local level and securing their speedy and effective implementation

The Sixth Plan envisages a massive total public sector plan outlay of Rs 97,500 crores, and aims at a growth rate of 5 2 per cent per annum in gross domestic product and of 3 2 per cent annum in per capita income

Thus, it can be seen that the main aim of planning in India is not only to bring about accelerated economic development, but to bring about basic changes in the social structure and social attitudes

There are a few criteria which enable us to determine the structural change in a society One such is the trend in urbanization Table I on page 164 gives the relative proportion of the rural and urban population for 80 years from 1901 (Census of India,1981)

Trends in Urbanization in India from 1901 to 1981*

Census		Percentage of total population	
Year	Total population	Urban	Rural
1901	232,967,285	11 00	89 00
1911	245,952,238	10 40	89 60
1921	244,259,874	11 34	88.66
1931	270,746,659	12.18	87 82
1941	309,019,062	14 10	85 90
1951	349,805,382	17 62	82.38
1961	424,836,466	18 26	81 74
1971	528,917,868	20 22	79 78
1981	658,140,676	23 73	76.27

* Excludes Assam and Jammu (1991 Census data are not available)

It will be observed that there is a conspicuous change in the proportion of the urban population after World War 2. It has increased from 14 1 per cent in 1941 to 18 26 per cent in 1961 and 23 73 per cent in 1981

The definition of the term "urban" adopted in the 1981 census is as follows:

(a) All places with a Municipality, Corporation, Contonment board or notified town area committee, etc.

(b) All other places which satisfy the following criteria :

   (1) minimum population of 5000;

   (2) at least 75 per cent of male working population engaged in non-agricultural pursuits; and

   (3) a density of population of at least 400 persons per sq km (1000 persons per sq mile).

This definition was adopted in the 1971 census and in fact has been adopted from 1951 onwards. It must be recognised that with the occupation criteria, the urbanization trend is more significant.

The progress in urbanization in the first tow Plans according to the figures given above are hardly impressive. It may be recalled that according to Daniel Lerner, 25 per cent urbanization appears *to be the critical optimum which transforms an agricultural society* to an industrial society

According to the projections given in the Sixth Plan, the urban population, which is estimated at 144 million in 1980 (21.81 per cent), is expected to increase to 166 million in 2985 (22.93 per cent) and to 189 million in 1990 (24.09 per cent) and ₹20.73 million in 1996 (25 40 per cent) In terms of Lerner's expectation only in

1996, the country may be able to transform itself from an agricultural to an industrial one, from the point of view of urbanization.

Another important criterion is that with respect to occupation. The proportion of people engaged in the secondary occupation namely manufacture and construction, should be at least one fifth, if not one third or more The following table gives the percentage distribution by the three sectors of the economy

Percentage Distribution Workers in the Three Sectors

Year	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
1901	71 76	12 61	15 63
1911	74 86	11 13	14 01
1921	75 99	10 41	13 60
1931	74 75	10 21	15 04
1951	72 12	10 62	17 2C
1961	72 28	11 70	16 02
1971	72 56	13 13	14 31

Note Primary consists of categories I, cultivator;II, agriculture labourers, and III, fishing (2) Secondary consists of categories IV, household industry, V, manufacture, and VI, construction work, (3) Tertiary consists of categories VII, trade and commerce, VIII, transport and communication, and IX, other services

Industrial Distribution of Work Force
(Usual Status) During 1972-73 and 1977-78 (Percentage)

Sl No	Industry	1972 73			1977 78		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
1	Agriculture, housing, forestry and fishing	68 9	84 4	74 0	66 9	80 2	70 7
2.	Mining and quarrying	0 6	0 3	0 5	0 6	0 3	0 5
3	Manufacturing	9 9	6 5	8 8	10 5	8 6	10 0
4	Electricity, water and gas supply	0 2	0 1	0 1	0 4	0 1	0 3
5	Construction	2 1	1 3	1 8	2 2	0 9	1 8
6.	Trade, restaurants and hotels	6 5	2 2	5 1	7 4	3 0	6 2
7.	Transport, storage and communication	2 6	0 J	1 8	2 9	0 2	2 2
8	Financing, insurance, real estates and business services	0 7	0 1	0 5	0 7	0 1	0 5
9.	Community, social and personal services	8 5	5 0	7 3	8 4	6 6	7.8
	Total	100 0	100 0	100 0	100 0	100 0	100 0

Source · N.S.S 27th and 32and rounds

Table II shows that there is hardly any difference between 1901 and 1971 regarding proportion of people engaged in the agricultural occupation. The position is not very much different even in 1977-78 (Table III). In fact, it shows that as far as occupational distribution is concerned, there is utter stagnation in the Indian Economy.

As we have seen above, planning for social change involves deliberate thinking, deliberate action and evaluation to determine the extent to which the planned programmes have been implemented in the society. We have also seen that such planning is limited by the fact that part of our social life is based on non-rational aspects like sentiments, values, etc ,on the one hand, and by the individual and social obstacles; the habitual reaction of an individual and his resistance to change, because change upsets his routine, and the obstacles generated by tradition and social heritage Thus, any planning for social change should limit itself only to those areas of social relationship, social attitudes and social values, which are guides more by considerations of efficiency than by considerations of sentiments Of course, it must be recognised that even considerations of sentiments are open to modifications, particularly during times of revolution when strong emotions may completely affect and change the strength of the sentiments

Any planning involves, on the one hand, a clear identification of the goals and on the other a concrete specification of the targets In our review of the various Five-Year Plans, we have observed that the goals of planned social change have been clearly set in terms of the provisions of the Constitution of India, namely, a democratic polity, equality of status and opportunity, social justice, liberty of thought and expression and the dignity of the individual However, with respect to concretization of the target the various Indian Plans are not very clear Of course, it must be recognized that the aim of these plans is economic development primarily and social change only secondarily. Probably this is one of the serious limitations in the Indian situation. It is possible that the various signs of anarchy witnessed in India after 1957 may be due to the *lack of a concrete social target. The mere realization of the economic* targets do not yield satisfaction

Planning is an attempt to shape the future by deliberate action. This clearly implies that we should understand the present in its relationship to the past as a basis for understanding the future trends The basic problem is the understanding of the

present social condition and their relationship to the past social condition.

It is true that the main aim of the Five-Year Plans is economic development, it is assumed that when production of goods increases and steps are taken to distribute them equitably social will change follow

The experience of 1973-74 with respect to food production has clearly shown that a mere bumper production of 115 million tonnes of foodgrain does not ensure that the cost of grains will come down The ideological assumption of the congress party and the Government was that if the grain is procured by the official agencies, prices can be stabilized But this has led to a disastrous situation Procurement of foodgrain is not a mere economic problem It is also a social problem The prosperous and even the not so prosperous producers have with held the stocks The merchants have purchased whatever is possible and hoarded The official agency has been forced to resort to the levy system No levy system can work with millions of producers scattered over a vast territory The net result has been an unprecedented civil war in the Gujarat state which gave the world Gandhi, the prince of non-violence

Economic planning can succeed only if the people are trained in the skills necessary and cooperate to achieve the targets With 50 per cent of the people illiterate and preoccupied with their efforts to get each day a modest meal for the family, it is futile to expect the planning efforts to succeed

9

MAJOR SOCIAL LEGISLATIONS

variation in social behaviour leading to variation in custom and ultimately in law

But, these very elements also give rise to enormous diversity among the various social sub-groups living in the country, thus preventing the building up of a national outlook and social solidarity They also helped in the perpetuation of irrational, inhuman and even barbarous customs. We may give two illustration with respect to diversity in social behaviour and in the law governing them Right from ancient times, there have been two kinds of outlook in India regarding widowhood. The elite group was against the remarrage of widows In fact, elite groups were even in favour of burning the widow on the funeral pyre of the husband, namely, *Sati* Even among the more human section of the elite the widow was exposed to several indignities and was bound by several restrictions The hair on her head was shaven off, she was prevented from wearing jewellery, attractive clothes, etc On the other hand, among the masses, widow remarriage was permitted by custom, though even among the masses the widow is looked upon as an inauspicious person and the remarried woman was not looked upon with the same respect as the first-married woman Still, the masses were in favour of both divorce and the remarriage of widows and divorcees. Both these outlooks regarding divorce and widowhood have gone on side by side for thousands of years in Indian society. Another illustration may be given regarding differences among the creeds Till recently, the Hindus as well as the Muslims practised polygamy. But the Hindu law has been changed in the recent years because of social agitation in favour of monogamy and equal rights for men and women. But the Muslims continue to be governed by their personal law, though the directive principles of the Constitution enjoin that there should be a common code for every citizen in India Still the legislature has not made it binding on all citizens of India to be monogamous Particularly in the recent years with the awareness of the people regarding family planning and population control, many feel that this discrimination may have far-reaching effects in the composition of the population. Even if a Muslim citizen adopts family planning, the ends of the family planing will not met because he can have four wives In fact, the great changes brought in law since independence have aimed at two objectives, namely, to eliminate diversities among the various sub-groups in the society and to bring the law in line with the changing outlook.

Ancient Indian Law and Social Change

In ancient and in medieval times the state never issued any edicts of statutes The king had no power to promulgate a law The duty of the king was to administer justice according to the *Dharmasastras Dharma* was looked upon as being "above the King and as the king of kings" The problem arises as to the agency which brought about changes in law according to changes in social norms As Setalvad writes, "The powerful impact of social and cultural values on law is acknowledged by the *Smritikars* who did not claim to be law-makers but only the exponents of precepts laid down by *divine authority* and compilers of *tradition handed down* from generation to generation." Thus, it is the *Smritikars* and the commentators who modified the law "so as to make it accord with the changing conditions of society and the altered social values" However, since the advent of the British the Hindu law became stagnant because the British courts looked upon the *Dharmasastras* as a final authority Still, enlightened leaders like Ram Mohan Roy and Iswarchandra Vidyasagar wanted the British Government to intervene and bring about changes in law to suit the new social values and social outlook.

Law as an Instrument of Social Change

There are two views about the functions of law According to one view, the essential function of law is to reinforce the existing modes and to provide a uniform procedure for the evaluation and punishment of deviance from the existing rules In other words, the function of law according to this view is social control and the major problem of law is to design the legal sanctions to minimize deviances and to maintain social stability.

According to the other view, law could be more dynamic it has not only function of social control but it has also to bring about social change by influencing behaviour, beliefs and values Often in the dynamic societies the social norms will be ahead of the legal codes In such societies, it is necessary to bring the legal code into conformity with the prevalent social values There is also another aspect: a dominant minority may have social values far ahead of the local code on the one side and the social practices of the masses

on the other Such minorities will endeavour to change the legal code as a means to persuade the rest of the group to adopt new social values

As an instrument of social change, law involves two inter-calated processes By means of new enactments there will be institutionalization of a new pattern of behaviour manifesting new social values When this new pattern is incorporated in the legal code, any deviance from this new pattern could be punished according to law However, as further discussion will show, mere institutionalization by itself is not enough. It may become a letter of the law but not a social force. In order that law could become an active social force, there should be a correlated cultural process, namely, the internalization of this new pattern of behaviour in the individual These two are closely related, if the institutionalization is successful, it facilitates the internalization of the new value by bringing about a change in the attitudes and beliefs of the individual through social upbringing in the individual families If such internalization does not take place then the mere legal codification and the institutionalization will not have any social value, on the other hand, it may bring law itself into contempt; people may lose respect for law

We can take three concrete examples from the current Indian situation to exemplify the relationship between codification and internalization

(a) According to the Hindu law, till 1955 polygamy was allowed However, there was informal social control against a man marrying a second wife when the first wife was alive. He had to get the permission from his wife as well as from his relatives to marry again This permission he could get if the first wife happened to be a chronic patient of was childless of was giving birth to only daughters The parents and other relatives might give their consent if they did not like the first wife or the family from which she came In other words, though law permitted him to marry, the social custom was against it.

From a long time social reformers were agitating that Hindu marriage should be monogamous The Hindu women have always resented the second marriage by a man when the first wife was alive This became more intense during the independence struggle when women realized that the law does not provide for equality between the sexes The educated women were strongly against this

But there was opposition from the orthodox section because monogamy entails divorce and facilitates the remarriage of the divorced women So they were afraid that the whole social fabric would be affected by this change in law But they were also conscious that polygamy means discrimination against women

Finally, the Hindu Marriage Act was passed in 1955 enforcing monogamy and permitting judicial separation and divorce After this Act was passed the opposition gradually died down Probably, it is only in the remote villages that the new law may be violated out of ignorance

Thus, this is a case where the social norms had changed ahead of legal provision Most of the Hindus were monogamous, in fact, very few married a second wife when the first wife was living, though the law permitted them to marry When the social reformers wanted to bring about a change there was opposition from the orthodox section but when the Act was passed there was acquiescence because there was really no change in the social norm the fear of the orthodox section that women would seek permission of the Court for judicial separation of divorce did not materialize since the prevailing social norm is against the wife seeking divorce Secondly, though according to the 1955 Act marriage is only a contract and it could be registered as a sacrament She would not like to annul the marriage unless her relatives gave their consent but relatives would be reluctant to give such consent because the prevailing social norm is against separation and divorce

(b) As a second illustration, we may take the Untouchability (Offences) Act, 1955 From times immemorial the Harijans in India have been made to live outside the village and outside the town though their services were essential in all religious functions either in the home of the village as a whole They were looked down upon because they were illiterate and dirty

However, enlightened citizens have been against the barbarous custom Right from the times of the Buddha there have been attempts to condemn this practice and to integrate the Harijans with the bigger society However, the large majority of the rural as well as the urban people were against this As a matter of fact, even Muslims as well as Christians in India followed the practice

Gandhi made the removal of untouchability an important element in his endeavour to reconstruct the Indian society When the Constitution was drawn up, it not only declared that according to Articles 14 and 15, the equality before law was a fundamental

right, it also abolished untouchability by Article 17, and made this practice punishable according to law. The Act was passed in 1955 providing for punishment against this practice.

Today, Harijan boys and girls are given full facilities for education up the highest standards in the universities. The rules also provide for the reservation of jobs in the Government. As a result of this, many Harijan men and women have now entered the highest professions of law, medicine, etc. Those who have entered politics have become national leaders and have been ministers in the State as well as in the Central Cabinets.

Thus, in the urban areas, the Harijan today does not suffer from any severe disability. Like other citizens, he goes to hotels, restaurants and other places of entertainment. However, in the villages there is still considerable hostility towards them. They are not permitted to go to the village school with freedom.

Thus, here we have a case of the law which is ahead of the social norm, particularly in the villages though they have the fundamental fight of equality and can seek protection of the court, the practice of untouchability has not been given up in the rural areas. In other words, as far as the village people are concerned, this institutionalization of a new social norm has not affected their way of life, i.e., the majority of the village people have not yet internalized this norm. Though the practice is illegal and the person practising could be punished by the court of law, there is social approval in the rural society for this practice, and consequently many Harijans living in the villages are suffering hardship in spite of the changes in the law. This clearly shows that mere institutionalization does not meet the ends of justice. Passing an Act is not enough to alter the social practice. There should be a movement against this practice on the lines on which Gandhiji had organized it in the thirties and forties. Thus, the new law could be effective only when there is a new social movement educating the public through propaganda.

(c) As a third illustration we could take the case of law relating to prohibition. Here again we find the influence of Gandhi. When he was alive he carried on a vigorous propaganda against the consumption of alcohol and against collection of excise revenue from this source by the Government. Picketing toddy shops was one of the important items in his programme of constructive work. He was convinced that Indian society could be regenerated only by the prohibition. Consequently, the constitution-makers put this as Article 47 among the directive principles of state policy.

Long before this, when Congress Party was able to form a government in several states in 1937, they enacted laws to prohibit the sale and consumption of liquor Particularly Madras and Bombay States enforced prohibition throughout the respective states It was at this time that Rajagopalachari introduced sales tax to help the government to raise the revenues that were lost on account of prohibition

However, right from 1937 there has been a strong opposition against prohibition from various classes After independence, it became a standing joke that the only "cottage industry" that was thriving in India was that of illicit distillation

As we have seen earlier, from times immemorial the tribal groups have been brewing their own liquor and one of their great hardships in the recent decades has been the imposition of excise duty on their drinks and later on the law of prohibition making it a crime In the same way many village people in many parts of the country have also been accustomed to brew their own liquor and to drink toddy from the palmyra tree While in the tribal groups alcoholic drink was part of their religious ritual, among the village people there was social approval for drinking

During the British period the educated Indians who formed the middle class moved with the Westerners and cultivated the habit of drinking, particularly in the larger cities of India It became fashionable to drink alcohol though the social norm in their group was against it Gradually, the upper middle class build up a new social norm approving alcoholic drink It also became the practice among the upper classes to drink at home when they invited their friends for a dinner party

Though prohibition was introduced by some of the state governments where the Congress Party was in a majority, there has been opposition from the upper middle class as well as from the lower class This was the reason why illicit distillation became quite common even before independence

It is true that studies have shown that prohibition has helped the urban labour families but there has not been any strong public opinion in favour of prohibition, nor was there any organizational efforts to influence public opinion The Congress Party which was in favour of prohibition felt satisfied that since legislation had made drinking a crime and was punishable by law they had nothing more to do This was the difference between the Gandhian approach and the approach of the Congress Party Gandhi was a social reformer But the Congress Party is not a reformist party Its aim has been to capture power and to exercise it like any political party

In the recent years there has been a difference of opinion among the Congress Leaders. Those who are in administration realize that prohibition is a costly experience draining away the resources form developmental work. So there has been a move in some states in the last few years to relax the rules regarding prohibition.

Thus the case of prohibition clearly shows how mere legislation without the support of public opinion is futile.

The above three cases show how important social values and social attitudes are to make social legislation a success Law could be a powerful force for social change only if a large majority of the people are in favour of the new social norms and when the majority of the people have been actually following the new social norm though it was not a part of law, as, for instance, monogamy In the case of untouchability, though some people are quite in favour of its abolition, the large masses in the rural areas and the big minorities in the urban areas do not want to give up their custom and consequently social legislation has been ineffective to bring about a change particularly in rural areas Practically, the entire lower class and the upper middle class are actively against prohibition and so the social legislation has not only been ineffective but it has also become a target for ridicule

Social Legislation in Pre-independence Days

Sati or the burning of the widow on the funeral pyre of the husband was the custom practised extensively in Rajasthan, among Rajput princes, and also among the Brahmins in Bengal, and to some extent in U P and other northern states

Ram Mohan Roy began the active campaign against Sati He studied the *Dharmasastra* and showed that they did not enjoin Sati He pointed out that Manu never mentioned Sati This led to a bitter controversy between the orthodox section which argued that this custom was required by the Vedas and the reformers who said that it was a barbarous custom which was not enjoyed by the Vedas and Dharmasastras Probably, this campaign by Ram Mohan Roy might have been responsible for the reduction in the number of cases of Sati from 839 in 1818 to 463 in 1828 It was at this time that Lord William Bentinck studied the matter, obtained the opinion of the military as well as civil authorities, and finally, in 1829 passed the Act prohibiting Sati and making it an offence

Yet another revolutionary social legislation of this period is the Hindu Widow Remarriage Act of 1856 Though *Sati* had stopped, other customs continued to make the life of a widow miserable *Some of these customs are prevalent even now but in* the middle of the last century enlightened Indians like Iswarchandra Vidyasagar, Behramji Malabaree, and others denounced these customs and wrote to the government to make widow remarriage valid by legislation The government to make widow passed this Act which is only to enable the widow to get married The first widow remarriage according to this Act was performed in Calcutta in the very same year 1856 Iswarchandra Vidyasagar himself set an example by getting his son married to a widow As a result of this Act, the social reformers started widow's homes and widow remarriage associations in different parts of the country They gave education to the young women who became widows and enabled them to remarry

Yet another illustration of social legislation is the Female Infanticide Prevention Act of 1870 Manmohan Kaur has given details of this babarous custom of killing the female infants as soon as they were born Because of the difficulty in getting a bridegroom in the same sub-caste and because of the heavy dowry and marriage expenses the new born female children were put to death In 1870 legislation was passed prohibiting this custom and enforcing registration of births and deaths

The next significant social legislation was the Special Marriage Act of 1872 which provided for marriage irrespective of differences in religion This Act is the first Act providing for civil marriage and registration of marriage as against the general custom of looking upon marriage as a sacrament and involving religious ceremonies But this Act did not provide for the intere caste marriages The Act was amended in 1923 in order to permit the intercaste marriage

Another important social legislation in pre-Independent India was against child marriage Little children of 5 to 10 years were being married The leaders of Brahmo Samaj and Arya Samaj protested against this custom In 1860 at the instance of Iswarchandra Vidyasagar, the *Indian Penal Code prohibited* the consummation when the girl was less than 10 years old Keshabchandra Sen carried on a vigorous propaganda against child marriage and the marriageable age was fixed at 14 for the girls and 18 for the boys according to the Brahmo Act of 1872 In 1891,

The Age of Consent Bill was passed by the Government prohibiting
cohabitation with a wife under the age of 12. With further agitation
the Child Marriage Restraint Act was passed in 1929 raising the
marriageable age of girls to 14 and of boys to 18. But this Act
remained practically a dead letter because it never reached the
village people for lack of publicity. Even the census of 1941 showed
that there were marriages of infants of one year. Nineteen per cent
of children between 5 to 10 and 38 per cent between 10 to 15 years
were recorded as having been married. But, with the change in
the social norms and with the belief that girls should be educated,
gradually the custom of child marriage is now practically given up.
This social legislation clearly shows that legislation by itself is
ineffective when the people, particularly those living in villages,
know nothing about it.

Another important Act of the pre-Independence era is the
Hindu Gains of Learning Act of 1930. The law of inheritance was
interpreted by the Court so that the earnings of a member of the
Hindu joint family were his own if his education was a general
education, But that such earnings would belong to the family if he
had been specially trained to profession. To remove this diffe ence
between general education and professional education and to enable
a man to have full right over his earnings from his profession,
Bhashyam Iyenger moved a bill as early as 1891 in the Madras
Legislature. While the social reformers contended that the
provisions of the bill would promote professional education, the
opponents declared that the bill would hinder education since the
joint family would not support professional education if all the
earnings by profession were to be personal and not become a part
of the family property. After many years, Jayakar was able to get
this bill passed in the Central legislature in 1930.

In the precedings paragraphs we have traced the course of
social legislation regarding marriage, joint family, etc. Now we may
review briefly the social legislation regarding children, vagrants
and beggars. While the laws noted above were passed by the
Central Government the laws regarding children and beggars
belong to the provincial field.

The Madras Children's Act of 1920 provided that no child
under 14 could be imprisoned. Its aim was to provide custody,
trial and punishment of youthful offenders (those below 14). Within
the next few years, many of the other Indian states passed similar
legislation and established juvenile courts and certified schools

These enactments reveal the change in the outlook of the people regarding juvenile delinquency It shows a new awareness of the people that the children should be given proper education rather than punishment for their crimes

Hyderabad State passed the Beggary Act in 1940 and Bengal followed in 1943 This Act gave power to the police offers to take a person before a Sub-Magistrate if he was wandering about asking for alms Other states passed similar legislation and established beggar homes in the following years

Finally, we may briefly refer to the labour laws passed in the pre- Independence era According to Pant, "The first such law relates to the regulation of the recruitment and employment of Indians who were sent out to the colonies or to the plantations within the country as indentured labourers" The Workmen's Breach of Contract Act 1859 helped the planters of Assam tea gardens to prosecute labourers who wanted to run away from the plantations The Employers and Workmen (Disputes) Act, 1860 made the worker liable to pay penalty for breaches of contract *The Indian Penal Code of 1860 also contains this provision All these Acts, including the Penal Code protected employer and not the worker The 1908 amendment abolished the system of penal contracts and the right of planters to arrest the workers The 1915 amendment finally abolished the indenture system in Assam*

The Factory Act of 1881 prohibited employment of children below seven years in the cotton mills It also fixed the hours of work for children between seven and twelve, at nine hours a day with a rest of one hour and four holidays a month

The 1922 Act defined a child as a person under 15 and prevented employment of children below 12 It limited the hours of work of adults to 60 hours per week with one hour rest per day The 1931 Act limited hours of work to 54 hours per week and the 1946 amendment reduced the work per week to 48 hours

Thus we see a constant effort on the part of legislation to prevent child labour and reduce the burden of children and also gradually to reduce the hours of work per week of the adults

Besides the above Acts, there were four other significant labour legislation which are of a more general nature These were all passed after the World War I because of the increase in the complexity of the industrial situation and the increase in the awareness of their rights among the labourers The general public opinion was also in favour of the recognition of the rights of workers

The Workmen's Compensation Act of 1923 required the employer to give compensation for accident disease, disablement, and death when these are due to working conditions. Thus, this was the first measure of social security in India.

The Trade Union movement in India started even in the 19th century The earliest records strike in India took palace in Nagpur in 1877 In 1886, Lakhande convened a meeting of the factory workers in Bombay and drew up a memorandum demanding "limitation of hours of work, a weekly rest day, known time recess and compensation for injuries." After World War I, Trade Unions were formed; but there was no legal recognition for them. The trade Union Act, 1926 provided for the registration of Trade Unions Thus, the Trade Union became a legal body.

After World War I, industrial strikes became frequent. So, in 1929, the industrial Disputes Act was passed which provided the machinery for the investigation and settlement of disputes The Act also prevented strikes without notice

With respect to wages, there was great variation from factory to factory and from State to State. There were also arbitrary deductions from the wages. To remedy the situation, the Payment of Wages Act of 1936 provided for regular and prompt payment of wages and prevented arbitrary deduction from wages

Thus, in the pre-Independence era, because of public opinion among the people at large as well as among the British and Indian administrators, a series of acts were promulgated to bring about a change in the social conditions with respect to marriage, the position of women, juvenile delinquency, beggary, child labour and women labour, and the conditions of labour in general.

Social Legislation since Independence

The Constitution of India provides for equality of status and the principle of social, economic and political justice to all citizens irrespective of caste, creed, sex, etc. In fact, this is put as an Article in the fundamental rights which are justiciable. Untouchability was abolished by Article 17 and Article 24 asserts that no child below '14 is to be employed in any factory. The directive principles of state policy have provided for legislation on various social matters Thus, after 1950, it has been the policy of the government to bring legislation in line with the fundamental rights enunciated in the Constitution. As a consequence of this, there has been considerable social legislation since independence.

In the independent India three acts, relating to marriage and family have been passed These three acts are very important they are .

1 Special Marriage Act, 1954
2 Hindu Marriage Act, 1955
3 Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961

We will discuss these in detail—

Special Marriage Act of 1954

The Special Marriage Act of 1954 may be said to be a refined form of the special Marriage Act of 1872 and the other Acts concerning Hindu marriage passed earlier during the British regime in this country The Act, which was made applicable to all the states of India except the state of Jammu and Kashmir is considered to be a revolutionary step to effect drastic changes in the traditional Pattern of Hindu marriage The major changes which were envisaged in this Act are as given under

(i) The Act provided for inter-caste marriages and there by gave a blow to the traditional caste restrictions in the choice of mated due to the age old norm of caste endogamy This eventually broadened the field of mate selection for the young Hindu men and women

(ii) The Act fixed the age of marriage at 21 years for the bridegroom and 18 years for the bride there by posing a challenge to the continuance of the age old custom of child marriage and the institution of early marriage

(iii) The Act by providing for the registration of marriages solemnized in accordance to religious rites gave an opportunity for divorce which was hitherto not permitted due to the sacramental nature of the Hindu marriage

Hindu Marriage Act of 1955

The Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 may be said to be an amalgamated refined form of all other Acts concerning Hindu Marriage which were in force prior to the enactment and enforce ment of this Act The Act is in force all over the country except the state of Jammu and Kashmir and is applicable to Hindus, Boudhs, Jains, Sikhs and all other sects related to Hindu religion However, the Act is not applicable to scheduled tribes

The Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 may be said to be a detailed all inclusive legislative measure covering nearly all the aspects of Hindu marriage viz conditions, guardianship, ceremonies, registration, divorce, re-marriage etc

It shall not be our endeavour hare to go in to the details of the aforesaid provisions of the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 for our interest here is centered on the effects and impact of these provisions on the Hindu marriage rather than in the detailed observation of the legal provisions envisaged in this Act The possible impact of this Act on Hindu marriage may be summarized in the following manner .

(i) The Act by redefining the concept of sapinda (limiting the same to 5 generations from the father's side and 3 generations from the mother's side in place of 7 generations and 5 generations from the father's and mother's side respectively, recognizing 'sapravar' and 'sagotra' marriages as valid and by including the Hindus, Boudhs, Jains, Sikhs and all other sects related to Hindu religion in the definition of the term Hindu has considerably widened the scope of mate selection was considerably limited due to sagorta, sapinda and sapravara restrictions on the one hand and the exclusion of Boudhs, Jains, Sikhs, etc from the Hindu group on the other

(ii) The Act has enhanced the possibility to inter-caste and inter-religion marriages which were totally tabooed in the traditional pattern due to prevalence and strict observance of the rules of caste and religion endogamy

(iii) The Act by fixing the age of marriage at 18 years for the bridegroom and 15 years for the bride has shattered the traditional institutions of child and early marriage and has introduced of late marriage along with some of its natural consequences like self selection of mate, romantic and love marriages, education as a preferable quality in mate selection, inter-caste, inter-religion, inter-provincial and sometimes international marriages

(iv) The Act by prohibiting Bigamy and Polygamy and by lifting the caste barriers in the selection of mate resulting in the eclipse of the traditional institution of 'Anuloma' (hypergamy) and 'Pratiloma'(hypogamy) marriages, has certainly attempted to do away with some of the major evils attached to traditional Hindu marriage

(v) The provision for divorce in the Act may be said to have introduced the greatest revolutionary change not only in the Hindu marriage but in the Hindu social organisation itself This provision in the Act has shattered the very belief of the traditional Hindus that marriage is a religious sacrament and the same is contracted in the Heaven rendering it indissoluble The provision of divorce has furthered the chances of looking at marriage more and more from the practical point of view father than philosophical and sacramental angle This therefore, has challenged the religious nature of the Hindu marriage and has enhanced the chance of shifting the goal of purpose of marriage from mere observance of certain religious rites to the performance of certain important social duties

The **Hindu Succession Act of 1956** confers for the first time absolute rights over the property possessed by a Hindu woman Secondly, both the sons and daughters get right of inheritance from the property of an intestate Hindu Thus, this Act overcomes the prejudice against women getting the property of the father

The **Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956,** is also a significant departure regarding the status of women It permits the adoption of a son or a daughter and makes adoption more a secular act than a religious one Further, it makes the consent of the wife necessary Finally, the widow has got the right to adopt

Dowry Prohibition Act of 1961

Dowry Prohibition Act of 1961 prohibiting acceptance of dowry as a pre- condition of marriage is expected to do away with a much prevalent social evil of the Hindu society The prevalence of the institution of dowry as a part of traditional Hindu marriage has been the root cause of a number of other evils in the Hindu society from time immemorial For example, wide age disparity between the husband and wife, prevalence of the institution of 'kulin' marriage, marriage of young girls with old men, marital tensions and unhappy family life, problem of widows etc which are generally attached with the traditional Hindu marriages are nevertheless the bye products of the institution of dowry Thus, the abolition of the institution of dowry through the Dowry Prohibition Act of 1961 is intended to bring about a number of changes in the traditional Hindu marriage

Another very significant Act is the **Untouchability (Offence) Act, 1955.** This is in accordance with the Article 17 of the Constitution and it replaces all the State Laws in this regard which were passed earlier This Act holds throughout the country. Offences against this Act are cognizable and compoundable But as we have seen earlier, the status of the Harijans in the villages has hardly improved because the upper castes continue to practise untouchability.

Even with respect to labour laws there has been marked change since independence because of the enunciation of the directive principles in Constitution. The **Factory Act of 1948** passed after independence, raises the minimum age of worker to 14 and made provision for annual medical examination of the workers between 14 and 18 **The Motor Transport Workers Act of 1961** provides for eight hours of work per day and 48 hours per week

The **Employment Exchange Act of 1959** provides for registration of the unemployed people and for training programmes. Thus, the state has taken upon itself the responsibility of helping the unemployed individuals to get jobs; but with the increase in population, this Act is also of hardly any significance Each Five-Year Plan sees a larger backlog of the unemployed people

The above survey of social legislation in India before independence as well as after independence clearly shows the efforts of the state and the society to bring the legal norms in line with the existing social norms on the one hand and to improve the social norms on the basis of new legal norms on the other. In the former case as in social legislation regarding monogamy, etc., there is considerable effectiveness, but with respect to the latter, the law has hardly any social force, because the change in the legal norms which are far ahead of the social norms involves an educational task Mere threat of punishment will not be effective. Such a situation produces what Festinger calls "forced compliance"; there will be a discrepancy between public behaviour and private belief So long as behaviour involves forced compliance, there is no internalization of the new values and so there will be disobedience of the law There must be effort by voluntary organization which have a faith in the new law as, for example, the prohibition law or untouchability removal law, to convert forced compliance or even non- compliance into voluntary compliance

Social legislation can be an effective means of social change only when the prevailing social norm is given a legal sanction No legislation can ever bring about a change in social norms This is because the process by which social norms arise is not formal, nor is it imposed from above and from outside Social norms arise within the group and are implanted in the child in the process of socialization within the first five years of its life By way of illustration, it can be shown that the 1955 Act regarding Hindu marriage He has succeeded with respect to monogamy which was already a social norm, while the provisions regarding age of marriage has not been effective because the prevailing social norm is contrary to legislation

Thus, social legislation can be effective only when it follows an existing social norm and formalises it, it cannot initiate a change in social norm and thus a change in social behaviour

Thus social change could never be brought about by unaided social legislation Social legislation could become effective only when there is organized voluntary effort to the people understand the new values embodied in the new law

Some Recent Changes in Hindu Marriage and the Recent Marriage Legislation—A Critical Overview

We have so far been dwelling on certain major legislations with regard to Hindu marriage and their possible impact on the institution of Hindu marriage It shall be our endeavour now to sort out those recent changes in Hindu marriage which might have possibly occurred due to the direct of indirect impact of recent legislation on Hindu marriage In this context the following changes in the Hindu marriage as observed in recent times may be considered

1. Emergence of the elements of companionship and contract in Hindu Marriage :

Traditionally Hindu marriage has always been a religious sacrament and establishment of marital relationship was tradition ally supposed to be the sacred responsibility of the parents of the other elderly members of the family However, recent legislation by introducing the elements of companionship and contract in HIndu marriage have been responsible for bringing about a change in the religious attitude towards marriage The provision of

inter-marriages and the right to dissolve the marriage through divorce and other such provisions of the Hindu Marriage Act have made many educated young men and women especially from the urban areas to look upon marriage as a contract of convenience.

2. Changing age of Marriage and weakening of the Institutions of Early and Child Marriage:

The age of marriage of both men and women among the Hindus has varied from time to time, place to place, caste to caste and sometimes from family to family However, traditionally, the Chief consideration in the determination of the marriageable age of the girls till recently was to marry her before the attainment of puberty The major reasons which might have made pre-puberty marriage for girls a must in the traditional Hindu society were firstly high regard for the chastity of women and secondly the idea, as pointed out by Kapadia, that the girl may not be mature enough to question the authority of her husband's domination under which she is shifted from the domination of her father after marriage

Whatsoever may have been the causes for the sustenance of the idea of pre-puberty marriage of the girls in the Hindu society, it is true, that in recent years a definite change in this context has been observed One of the recent studies of Kapadia on a sample of 256 women graduate teachers revealed that some three fourth of them married after attaining seventeen years of age The general upward trend in the age of marriage has also been supported by the study of Ross in Banglore city, Gore's study of Agarwal families in Delhi and many other similar studies in recent years

Although the rise in the age of marriage might have been the cumulative effect of a number of factors like education of women engagement of girls in economic pursuits, urbanization, westernization and modernization etc the impact of legislative measures in this context cannot be altogether ignored The fixation of marriageable age at 18 and 15 respectively for men and women and the provision intended to the abolition of child and early marriages etc as incorporated in the Hindu marriage Act have had their own impact at least on the educated urban dwellers if not on others

We may therefore, safely conclude that the recent legislation with regard to Hindu marriage has contributed towards the development phenomena of late marriage among the Hindus which was hitherto unknown in the traditional Hindu society

3. Widening of the Area of Mate Selection :

In the traditional Hindu marriage, due to the strict obser vance of certain exogamic and endogamic rules, the field of mate selection was extremely restricted Accordingly a person was supposed to marry within his or her own caste, sub-caste, religion and linguistic group and was further expected to avoid a person belonging to his or her own Gotra, Pinda and Pravara while selecting the marital partner The recent marriage legislation, as we have seen earlier, have considerably removed the barriers of caste, sub caste, religion, linguistic group, gotra and pravara in the selection of mate thereby widening the field of mate selection considerably

4. Enhanced Possibility of Inter-marriages :

Here it would be worthwhile to throw a bit more light on the future of intermarriages in the Hindu society with reference to the recent legislation in this context It is generally claimed that the various marriage legislations have account for the introduction of various types of inter marriages in the Hindu society which were hitherto strictly prohibited It is true that the various legislative measures like the Special Marriage Act of 1872, The Arya Samaj Marriage validity Act of 1938, The Hindu Marriage Disabilities Removal Act of 1946, The Hindu Marriage Validity Act of 1949 and the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 have aimed at the introduction of inter marriages in the Hindu society However, the question is whether in actual practice such marriages have become popular of not ? Certain recent studies in this context do not paint a very rosy picture although these studies do confirm a favourable shift in the attitude of educated urban dwellers in respect of inter-caste, inter-religion and inter-provincial marriages In her study of the attitude towards inter-marriages, Ross has noted that men have more lenient attitude towards inter-marriages than the women However, inspite of this favourable attitudinal shift towards inter marriages, Ross could not trace out many who themselves or any member of their family had actually chosen to marry out of their caste, religion or linguistic group

5. Derivation in Traditional Arranged Marriages :

We have already noted that recent legislation has consider ably altered the religious and orthodox texture of Hindu marriage making it more of a social contract than a religious sacrament This shift in the very philosophy of Hindu marriage under the legal protection of the recent marriage legislation may be expected to have aroused the tendency towards self selection of mate and a

keen desire to go in for Romantic or Love marriages among the
young men and women of the Hindu society. So far as the tradition
goes, the marriage contract was looked on as an agreement between
two families rather than between two young people. As such the
job of mate selection was considered to be the essential duty of the
parents who were morally obliged to find suitable matches for their
children. Love and courtship had no place in traditional Hindu
marriage as the Hindu ideal had no regard for individual tastes
in matter of mate selection. Love as per the traditional Hindu view,
is the result of marriage and not the prelude to it. It may be noted
here that although Manu did recognize mate selection by mutual
choice, he placed it far down on his list of preferences

In recent years it has been observed that freedom of choice
in marriage is accepted by a few of the educated urban Hindu
families influenced by western pattern. However, inspite of this,
freedom of choice in marriage has not yet become a widely accepted
pattern. It may be noted here that even when the young men and
women are given more freedom of Choice, the parents still do most
of the arranging

However, the change that has so far been observed in respect
of freedom in mate selection is that instead of the former practice
of parents and relatives making the complete decision in the matter
or at the most giving the children the opportunity of selecting from
a group of picked candidates, the young aspirants for marriage
themselves tend to select the person they wish to marry and seek
the approval of their parents. Thus, although individual freedom
in the choice of mate might be found in some enlightened urban
families and a few stray cases of Romantic or Love marriages might
be seen here or there, in on way they can be said to have become
widely accepted phenomena. This is borne out by the study of Ross
in this context which revealed that though the young men and
women may show some modern trends in their attitude to marriage
and the relationship between the husbands and wives, the theme
of Romantic love as a basis for marriage is still not very deep and
widespread in the family mores of India even today. Srinivas in
his study also noticed that romantic or love marriages are
uncommon even amongst the educated middle class. It may,
however, be concluded that the recent legislative provisions with
respect to Hindu marriage have surely opened the gates for
self selection of mate and thereby have considerably enchaned the
possibility of inter-caste, inter- religion, inter-provincial, inter-lin-
guistic and romantic marriages in near future

6. Changing Stability of Hindu Marriage :

Traditionally Hindu marriage has been a very stable arrangement. Marriage has always been seen as a religious sacrament by the Hindus and therefore the orthodox Hindus *strongly believe that the marriage once solenized cannot be* dissolved at the mere will of the mating partners Moreover, the traditional belief to the Hindus that marriage is contracted in heaven further renders the Hindus marriage practically indissoluble. thus, from the traditional view point a Hindu marriage is dissolved only when the husband and the wife are separated by death Even in the event of death of the male partner women are *supposed to remain bound to their dead husbands* Widowhood, in the traditional Hindu society is regarded as a state of celibacy and therefore remarriage of the Hindu widow is altogether tabooed

With the introduction of certain specific legislative measures which gave equality to women with men in matter of divorce, one may expect that the *general attitude towards divorce must have* changed considerably in recent years Many a recent study in this regard reveals that a favourable attitude towards divorce is fast developing especially among the educated urban people of the Hindu society For instance, many women respondents of Aileen Ross in her study were found to be very much in favour of securing the right to divorce on the ground of equality with men Ross further found that *these women respondents* had a strong conviction that the right to divorce shall serve as a safety valve to arranged marriage in the same study, the stress laid on the point of incompatibility as a valid ground for permitting divorce by many respondents, suggest that a new attitude reflecting the values of individualism and companionship is fast developing especially among the educated men and women who strongly feel that difference in taste, temperament and personality of the husband and wife which creates many problems of marital adjustment resulting *in marital tensions and unhappy marriages should be* treated as the most important ground for divorce

Whatever has been said in the preceding paragraph should not be interpreted *as an indication of a heavy rise in the divorce* rate in the Hindu society in recent times due to the impact of marriage legislation concerning the Hindus As a matter of fact one would find that divorce has not yet gained general acceptance and many conflicts centre around this crucial aspect of marriage The provision of divorce in recent marriage Act has, however,

enhanced the chances of dissolution of marriages, somewhat loosened the marital ties and has considerably weakened the traditional sacramental concept of marriage which rendered Hindu marriage indissoluble all these years.

7. Weakening of the Economic Consideration in Marriage :

Traditional settlement of a Hindu marriage invariably involve certain economic considerations. In a traditional Hindu marriage the parents of the bridegroom show a definite tendency to extract as much as possible from the parents of the bride. It is for this reason that the parents of the bridegroom generally use to cautiously verify the economic status of the family from which they proposed to procure the bride for their son. This tendency on the part of the parents of the bridegroom not only renders it difficult for the father of the daughter to find out a suitable match for her but also create a number of other problems some of them being extremely inhuman in nature.

The actual cost of dowry to a parent depends upon the social and economic position of the family and the education of the bridegroom As per the findings of Srinivas in one of his studies in certain parts of south India, the bridegroom price viz. dowry is standardized with the academic qualifications of the boy the burden of dowry accounts for the fact that daughters are less welcome than sons on birth in most of the Hindu families

The widening of the scope of mate selection through the various provisions of Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 and the enactment of the more direct Dowry prohibition Act of 1961, which render giving and taking of dowry as punishable acts, have undoubtedly increased the chances of its abolition as an integral part of Hindu marriage However, it remains to be seen as to how far these legislative measures prove effective in this context. As the dowry prohibition act has its own loop holes and limitations and the concept of dowry given therein is not very specific, one may not expect any drastic change in respect of this system at least within a shorter span of time. Yet the passage of this Act will surely put some restraints on free and open bargaining on dowry and will render it difficult to break the marital alliance simply on this issue Moreover, the presence of such an act prohibiting dowry will also have some moral pressure on those who may aspire to extract more and more and more in the form of dowry while selecting a mate for their son

The recent marriage legislation has no doubt opened the avenues for civil marriages among the Hindus but here too in actual practice the impact of legislative measures in this respect are yet to come in light for most of the Hindu marriages are still solemnized in accordance to the traditional pattern.

Form what has been said in the preceding pages, one may conclude that the recent legislation on Hindu marriage has although paved the way for certain widespread changes in the traditional pattern of Hindu marriage, they are yet to diffuse in the existing cultural pattern of the Hindu society to cause the changes to occur in actual practice. As a matter of fact, the impact of the said legislation has so far remained confined to certain attitudinal changes in respect of some specific aspects of marriage and that too within an enlightened cross section of the urban society largely belonging to the younger generation. Moreover, the impact of these legislative measures are yet to reach the rural community of this country. However, with the gradual dissemination of the now social values incorporated in the recent marriage legislation in the present day Hindu society, one may expect them to become really meaningful to effect certain major changes in Hindu marriage in due course of time.